FEAR

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JAMES EDWARDS

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BY

JOHN RATHBONE OLIVER

A.B. (HARVARD), M.D. (INNSBRUCK)

Until thy feet have trod the Road
Advise not wayside folk,
Nor till thy back has borne the Load
Break in upon the Broke.
(KIPLING, *The Comforters.*)

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To
THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER
MARION RATHBONE OLIVER
"Lux perpetua luceat ei"

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PREFACE

This book has grown out of an address in which I attempted to discuss the importance of the symptom of fear. This address seemed to me to contain nothing particularly new or stimulating. However, at the suggestion of some who were interested in it, I have expanded it into this book.

It has become rather longer than I had planned to make it. But, as I wrote, so many things suggested themselves, things that I have been saying to my patients for many years and that I wanted to say to a less restricted group of individuals.

In order to lend some human interest to all this I have tried to take a typical, very common case of psychasthenia, with predominant symptoms of fear, and to show at least one method of dealing with it. I have embodied in the story of the treatment of the case the results of my own experience in dealing with many similar mental states. And I have tried also to point out clearly exactly where the work of the psychiatrist must stop, and where the work of the priest or the evangelical minister must begin. For, whatever the future may bring, this is not yet the time for priest-physicians, or physician-priests.

This book contains in no sense a scientific treatment of fear and its mental mechanisms. But here and there the reader will find references to authoritative treatises in which such scientific information may be found.

I dedicate it to the memory of the most valiant, the most fearless personality that I have ever known. Since my boyhood, when I used to bring the poems that I wrote for our school literary society at St. Paul's to my mother for criticism or approbation, I have been used to bring to her also whatever I have worked for and won, working and achieving not so much for myself as for her. So now, during this first summer without the encouragement of her bodily presence, I have tried to write this book, trusting in a love that surrounds and helps me still.

Pointe au Pic, Canada,
August 15, 1926.

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FEAR

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JAMES EDWARDS

PART FIRST

CHAPTER I

THE COMING OF FEAR

The Boy.

The Boy sat up in bed, alone, in the dark. The clap of heavy thunder that had startled him out of a sound sleep was rumbling away in the distance. The house was very quiet. Suddenly, down below, he heard the creaking of a window—the pantry window. He recognized the treacherous noise of the sash at once; often enough he had slipped into the pantry himself by that same window to get a cookie or a drink of milk. He might have had them both for the asking, but he was fourteen and it seemed "kiddish" to ask people for sweets. And now that same window had—had opened. He listened breathlessly. Somebody trying to get in—in the middle of the night—somebody— His breath caught in his throat. For the silence was broken again by a creaking of the stairs. A footstep—someone trying to walk very quietly—someone coming nearer and nearer—up and up the stairway which ended on the landing just outside his room. Something mysterious—something that meant danger to himself—and it was coming nearer—and nearer. He slipped quietly out of bed and stood

at the door of his room trying to pierce the surrounding darkness. The approaching footsteps had stopped. Now was his chance. If he could only summon up enough courage to cross the dark hall to his mother's room. But suppose, out in the dark entry, he should bump into the Unknown Thing coming up the stairs. "Oh," he half sobbed. "Oh, I'm—I'm afraid." The next moment he was standing in the dark by his mother's bed. But before he could find her face with his outstretched hand, she was awake; she had put out her arm and drawn him into the bed beside her. He lay with his head on her shoulder, his shaky voice babbling his terror into her ear. "Why, my son," he heard her say, "there is nothing to be afraid of. Your father went downstairs to close the windows after it began to rain, and he came back softly, so as not to wake you children." The boy pressed closer to the strong, encircling arm. His tense muscles relaxed; a sense of warm, blissful security seemed to surround and protect him. He had been so frightened. And of what? Of his own father. Yet he made no attempt to move from his mother's side. But she withdrew her arm and lifted the bedclothes. "Can't I stay a while yet?" he whispered. "It might, you know, it might begin to thunder again." As a matter of fact he was not afraid of the thunder, but he did not want to pass through the dark hall on the way to his room. His mother understood, but she gave him a gentle push. "Go back to your

bed, my son," she said. "There is nothing to fear. And if you are afraid, why, you know that I am always here. You can get to me in a moment. And even when you are not close to me as you are now, my love is about you always."

He walked through the dark hall with his head up. At the top of the stairs he heard his father's footstep. "Is that you, Dad?" he whispered, though his voice was not very steady. "I hope the rain didn't spoil anything." He caught his father's whispered "Good-night," and in a few seconds was curled up in his own bed. "My gosh," he murmured, pulling the bedclothes up to his ears, "but I was scared. I wonder why." He was sound asleep almost instantly, and did not hear his mother, who stood listening in the dark outside his open door until he was breathing regularly and she could slip in on tiptoe to kiss him while he slept.

The Man.

The Man leaned back from his office desk, looked at the end of his heavy black cigar, and tossed what was left of it into an ash-tray. His cigar did not taste as well as it usually did. Perhaps he was smoking too much. On his way downtown he had had another one of those queer dizzy "spells." But no one had noticed it, and it had not lasted long. He had done a good morning's work; business, *his* business, was the best medicine for him. Once he got to his desk he forgot everything else, and then

he lived, really lived; then he recaptured the push of ambition and well-being that made him feel young. Not that he was old; not yet. His father, down there on the old farm where he himself had been born, had lived to be nearly ninety. Why should not he, the son, live even longer? And he was only fifty now. That would give him fifteen more years at the business before he need think of retiring. Or perhaps twenty-five. For now was his chance to expand, to do what he had always wanted to do. It was not enough that no American or Englishman could make his morning's toilet without using that particular thing which he, James Edwards, of "Naughton & Edwards," had invented, had manufactured, and had made so necessary, so well known. On the wrapper of that product was his, James Edwards', picture. Thousands of men looked at that picture every morning. But the Frenchmen, the Germans, even the men in India and China, should look at it too. It must become a "world-wide advertised product." Naughton, his partner, had had no such ambitions. But now Naughton was gone, and he——

Mechanically he reached into his pocket for another cigar and bit off the end. Naughton's going out had been mighty sudden. To think of it even now, two weeks after the funeral, gave him a slight sense of uneasiness. A fellow really had no business to make such a lot of trouble; he ought to give his friends, his partner, time to get ready for changes.

But to be or to seem perfectly well one morning, here in this very room at that desk over there, and then, at a directors' meeting an hour later, to crumple up in his chair, hammer on the ground with the heels of his shoes, snort through his nose, and then—just die, right there before anyone could even get a doctor—that was a little too hard on other people. "Cerebral haemorrhage," the doctor had said; what in the old days they called a "stroke." Something going wrong inside the brain—a blood vessel breaking. Just a tiny little vessel, if it broke in the brain, could send you "out" like that. But Naughton had been sixty-five, and he hadn't been a man of settled habits—he drank a good deal; and then, of course, he wasn't married. That must make a difference.

Now he himself had always lived a very regular life. At twenty-six, he had gone into this manufacturing firm—"Naughton & Company" it was then—and he'd been with them ever since. And it was he who had invented—or nearly invented—the product that had made the firm famous. There had been bad times, of course. But he had stuck to his work. Not a single holiday for the first ten years. The "two weeks off" that the firm gave him he spent puttering around in the factory. And during the years of his partnership he hadn't found much fun in vacations. What he liked best was to have his wife go away for two months to Atlantic City, and to let the servants all go except one maid who could

cook a little. Then he lived in the town house alone, taking his breakfast there, or sometimes bringing an old friend or two in for some sort of a "pick-up" supper, to which they could sit down in their shirt-sleeves if it were a very hot evening, and then play a little poker afterward. That was the kind of a holiday he really enjoyed.

When his wife came back from Atlantic City he was glad to see her, of course. But, after all, even while she was at home they didn't see so very much of one another. She had been a big, blonde, quiet girl when he had first met her at high school, not full of all sorts of foolish clever talk, like some of the others, but willing to listen to what he said. He was only twenty and she barely nineteen when they married. She hadn't complained much, although the first years were hard. Yet why should she? He'd been wise enough to choose a girl who came from a poor family, who wasn't used to much at home, and who couldn't very well complain as long as her husband gave her enough to eat. But, after his success and his money had come, then she had seemed to change somehow. She had begun to complain then; she had kept it up ever since—asking him why he didn't join the country club, or entertain more, or learn to play golf, and a whole lot of foolishness. Why, he didn't have time for unimportant things like that. So she had gone her own way. After the second child was born (she had had a rather mean time of it), she had sworn that there should

never be another one. She had grown fat, or lazy, never got up for breakfast and lay down in the afternoon. But at night she was spry enough—wanted to drag him out to theaters and dances—him at his age—a busy man like himself, who came home in the evening from the office dead tired, too tired to do anything except read the paper and crawl into bed. Yet they had never quarreled. And he had been a good husband. Or better than most.

He squinted down at the end of his cigar and grinned sheepishly. His eyes turned to the lower drawer of his desk. There, in a locked old dispatch box, were some letters—letters that represented his one "infidelity." It had cost him a lot of money to get them back, those letters. In fact, that one little side step had meant so much worry, so much dread of publicity and scandal, that by comparison the money it had cost seemed of little importance, even to him, who "knew a dollar when he saw one." But the experience had taught him a lesson. Ever since then he had been a "good husband," not because he believed that this was what he ought to be, but because other courses of action were liable to be attended by too much uneasiness and expense. But, of course, thoughts cost nothing, nor were they dangerous if not put into words. So he indulged himself mentally. A most unhealthy type of indulgence, had he but known it—dangerous just because it was so cheap.

Someone knocked at the door of his office, and a

clerk came in softly with the letters from the eleven o'clock delivery, which he laid carefully on the Big Man's desk. Then he went out, hiding a satisfied grin. For he had put on top of the pile a letter in a handwriting which he had recognized, and which, as he knew from office gossip, was never a welcome sight to his employer.

When the Big Man saw it he scowled. From his son. What did he want now? So far as he could remember letters from his son had never brought him anything but annoyance. If the boy had only been dissipated or extravagant. If he had only got into trouble of some kind, no matter how bad, then his father might at least have been able to lecture him, to criticize him, to call him names even. It must be better to have an affectionate, dissipated, even dishonest son, than a son so utterly unlike his father that there was no sense of unity or of communication between them. He had wanted the boy in his business, to carry on what he had begun. And yet, from the very beginning, the boy had insisted on going his own way. And what a way!

If he had to be interested in physics and chemistry, why couldn't he have taken up some kind of laboratory stuff that would have helped the family business? Modern manufacturing companies had investigators who sometimes discovered a useful thing or two. The boy might have had some sort of a little laboratory fixed up for him at the "Plant." His father would have found the money—as much

as five hundred dollars, if need be. But to get interested in what he called "research," to waste four years at Harvard, and then, just when his father expected to get some return for all he'd spent on his education, to want to go on studying and researching still more at some other high-brow university in the East—expecting to put in three or four—yes, three or four more years—the very best years of his life—working on some useless, impractical stuff about the "structure of the atom," why, it was maddening! And there seemed no end to it. According to what the boy said he might be at this "researching" for the next ten years. He, the father, had threatened to cut off supplies. But the son had only smiled, in his maddening, superior way, as if he were trying to explain high finance to an imbecile—and had got himself some sort of a wretched scholarship. So the father had continued his allowance; he wasn't going to let his son "get the best" of him that way.

He put aside his son's letter. It wasn't like him to postpone disagreeable things; but somehow he didn't feel very "peppy" this morning. He glanced over the other letters. Well, anyway there was one member of his family who seldom if ever bothered him with letters, pleasant or unpleasant. His daughter. For all the good she was to him he might as well have no daughter at all. He opened a lower drawer in his desk and drew out a small, well-thumbed ledger. In this book he had kept a record

of every cent he had ever spent on his two children. His mouth relaxed a little as he glanced at the first page. How well he remembered the feeling of pride with which he had set down the amount of the doctor's bill, the cost of the nurses, even what he had paid for the telegrams that he had sent to his father to tell him that his girl, *his* girl, had been brought safely into the world. And at that time he hadn't been able to pay all these bills at once either. Here was the entry, when his daughter was two years old, and his boy "on the way," the entry of his last payment on those same accounts. He turned page after page of neatly written figures. He had done the best he could for that girl of his. Better schools and teachers as he got richer; two years at the "finishing school" in Washington, and then, that year abroad in England, where she had learned the beginnings of her nonsense. If he had never allowed her to leave their home in a sensible American city of the Middle West, she'd never have met that man on the steamer that brought her back. A man ten years older than herself; a perfect stick, who thought he knew everything; some sort of a government employee in the State Department, or as he called it, the "diplomatic service." Anyway, she had married him; and since that she'd scarcely been in America at all. Moving from one crazy foreign country to another. If he'd been in the consular service, in touch with business, perhaps even this son-in-law might have been of some use. But he

was a "diplomat." The Big Man at his desk twisted about uneasily as he remembered the one attempt he had made to get his diplomatic son-in-law to put him in touch with some "big business" in Sweden. Worse still was that time, five years ago, when his daughter and her husband were in Washington, because he had been assigned to some sort of a desk job at the State Department. Nothing to do but sit all day at a desk and read or sign papers. And he, his father-in-law, whose allowance to his daughter made it possible for her to "maintain the dignity of her position," as she called it, he, who in a sudden moment of sentimental tenderness had wanted to see his daughter—why, he had been treated like a—like some clumsy country relation of whom his own people were ashamed. That's what they were, in their big apartment in Washington, with all their Mr. Chief Justices, their Mr. Secretaries, their Senators, their His Excellencies—ashamed of him. And the worst of it was that they thought he hadn't noticed it. But he knew; he had a sort of sixth sense for people who didn't like him, for remarks that sounded all right but that had some half-hidden, sneering meaning.

He put back the account book and kicked the drawer shut. What had he got out of his children? After all he had invested in them. Why, he didn't know them as well as he knew his own chief clerk, or his foreman at the Plant. He had never known them. Even as little children they had never been

close to him. Of course, in those early days he hadn't had much time for them. He came home late, dead tired; often he brought work from the office with him, and the children's shrill voices annoyed and bothered him. Besides, their mother knew how to keep them quiet, and he didn't. Then, later, when they were at school, they were always asking questions, perfectly idiotic questions. He had had important things to think of in those days —his little "invention" that had made the fortune of his firm was just being put on the market. He couldn't be bothered at meals with foolish questions from a pair of growing kids.

Yet somehow, he thought, as a man gets older—of course, not yet old—why he sort of misses—he misses——

Well, what does he miss? He couldn't exactly answer his own question. Anyway, he had the business; he had his work. Here at the office he was the one supreme authority, bowed down to and considered. A hard driver of his employees perhaps, but not unjust. And he worked as hard as any one of them—harder oftentimes.

Idly fingering the letters on his desk, he picked up the one that lay lowest in the little pile. On the envelope was the name of his life-insurance company. For the first time that morning his mouth relaxed, and his body seemed to lose a little of its antagonized tension.

Of course he had been an "easy mark" for that

young insurance salesman who had been in his office two weeks ago. But that young fellow had been so clever, so sure of himself and of his "proposition," so clean-cut, so efficient. Ah, if he had only had a son like that! He didn't want any more life insurance, and yet he had allowed himself to be persuaded, just because his heart had somehow warmed to the salesman. He had gone to the medical examiner of the company last week. A waste of valuable time, a mere routine. And they had done the usual stunts, even more carefully than usual. They even put that cuff that fills up with air twice around his upper arm. And now, here were the papers. He would attend to them at once and send in a check for the new premium, so that that young salesman—clever youngster, just the same type that he had once been himself—so that he might get his commission without delay. To his surprise the envelope contained only a single sheet. A typewritten letter. He read it through hurriedly.

Then he spread it out carefully on the desk before him, and read it through again.

Refused? Additional life insurance refused?

A sort of breathless tension seemed to start from the center of his body and spread slowly to the tips of his fingers. He put his hand to his forehead. The hand shook and his forehead was moist with little beads of sweat. Then, for a moment, it seemed to him as if he sensed a something—a mysterious hostile something—still far off, but beginning to move

closer and closer toward himself, and bringing with it, nearer and nearer, a feeling of impending calamity, of something unclear yet appalling, that was going to happen, and that he was powerless to prevent. He stared around his office. Somehow it seemed strangely unfamiliar. Everything looked different.

He pulled himself together with an effort.

A mistake. Of course, that was it. Somehow his papers at the insurance office had got mixed up with those of some other man. Why hadn't he thought of that before?

In a few minutes he had put through a call to the insurance office, and, over-riding all protests, had succeeded in getting the young salesman who had persuaded him to take out the extra insurance. It was a decidedly embarrassed young man who spoke to him, but it did not take James Edwards long to realize that, if there had been any mistake, it did not lie in this direction. However, he was a determined type. His hand was steady again, although his voice was incisively thin when he finally got into touch with the company's medical examiner. He found him quite as determined a personality as himself.

"I am sorry, Mr. Edwards," the medical examiner was saying; "it is against our rules to go into the details of a refusal. But I am told by my chief that some exception may be made in your case, as you have been one of our policyholders for so long. We

have a hard-and-fast rule that refuses, as poor risks, applicants whose arterial tension—I mean whose blood-pressure—is higher than the pressure found to be normal at that applicant's age. Yours is too high, Mr. Edwards. Of course this may, you understand, and probably does, mean nothing ominous. Here, as you know, we deal in general averages of risk. You might consult your own physician. No, I can't give you any advice or say anything more. Good-by."

Mr. Edwards was usually a man of system. He had on his desk a long morning's work. But suddenly his work seemed to have become of no importance at all. There was only one thing in the world of importance now. He must find out about this tormenting tension, this sense of approaching calamity, that made his knees loose and his hands shaky. He rang up his physician, a general practitioner. He called Dr. Willis "his," although he had never been under the doctor's care except once during a short attack of influenza; but this physician had brought the Edwards children into the world and still saw Mrs. Edwards occasionally.

"I don't care, Dr. Willis," he said, "whether you have fifteen patients waiting. I want you to see me at once. You can't? Not until this afternoon? Well, then, at two o'clock."

This wait was maddening. But it could not be helped. He turned to his desk again. Then he got up, lighted another cigar, and paced up and down.

Abruptly he remembered something, connected in his mind with his smoking. Those attacks of dizziness! What if they did not come from smoking, after all?

And how about his dead partner, Naughton? Hadn't he complained of vertigo; and hadn't he once said something about high blood-pressure? Was that—what was coming to him—to him, Edwards, the healthy, the untiring, the efficient, the energetic—that sudden dropping forward in his chair somewhere—thumping on the floor with his boot-heels—snorting through his nose—struck dumb and dying in an instant—carried off, a motionless hulk—never to speak or move again? Was *that* it—this threatening something that he seemed to sense coming nearer and nearer to him—from somewhere out of the distance; was this the meaning of that sense of impending calamity, so vague and yet so terrifyingly real? Why, if it were really coming toward him, moving irresistibly with a tread that one could only just hear, at intervals—why, then, IT might actually come—might arrive, might be here at his shoulder, at any time. To-morrow—to-night perhaps—or even now.

A sense of absolute unreasoning panic swept over him.

He became uneasy. Suddenly, he felt afraid to be alone. If IT did come, then he ought to have someone near him. Otherwise he might be stricken where he sat—might not be able to call for help—

and the few precious minutes, when perhaps medical aid might do something, would be lost irrevocably.

He went out into the hall onto which the doors of several other offices opened. Without any definite plan he opened the first door to which he came, and walked into the presence of the head of his sales force, O'Connor, a heavy-jowled, powerful man, who moved to his feet with unexpected ease of motion when he saw his chief. A look of anxiety flared up in his eyes. The "boss" never visited his subordinates; he sent for them. What had he done? What mistake had he made? It must be very serious.

The two men stood for a moment, gazing at one another. Then the older man cleared his throat, his eyes fell, and his hand went up to his mouth to cover the twitching of his lips. Now that he was here, in his subordinate's office, he did not know how to explain his presence. But O'Connor was used to reading men's expressions. It was his business to be in touch with all his salesmen, to keep them in good humor, to meet the visiting purchasers from the small towns, and to give them to eat and drink as much as they would, or could. And, on the "morning after," he often had to patch them up a bit before seeing them off to the train. So he recognized, or thought he recognized, the glazed eye and the unsteady hand. He suppressed a chuckle. The Old Man himself. Who would have thought it? But no wonder. Office gossip said that he had a

pretty rotten time at home. Before Edwards could speak, O'Connor had stepped to his side.

"Forgive me, boss," he said, with a sort of respectful consideration that seemed to soothe Edwards at once, "but you don't look a bit well this morning." Then, as Edwards murmured something about not having slept well and feeling tired out, he turned back to his desk. "Now, sit down a minute, and let me give you something. You know I keep just a little of the best stuff for some of our customers. I'll fix you up a drink. And you'll feel right as rain in a minute."

Ten minutes later Edwards was back at his own desk. Curious how the alcohol, to which he was unaccustomed so early in the day, had given him back his sense of self-confidence. He was master of himself again. What a fool he had been? There couldn't be anything really the matter with him. There must be a mistake somewhere. That was all.

He read over some reports on his desk; even dictated a letter or two. But when he got up from his desk-chair he felt unsteady for a moment. But that soon passed—just the natural results of the alcohol.

He hurried out to his lunch. Never in all his years of business had he ever taken more than twenty minutes for luncheon. He always went to a big restaurant, just across from his office, where you picked out what you wanted from the counter, and sat down and ate in silent haste. To-day there

was an unusual crowd around the counter; he had to wait several minutes before he got to it. Then, to his surprise, he found that he was unusually hungry. He wolfed down a bowl of hot soup and a heavy ham sandwich. Then he went to the counter again and took a chocolate eclair; he ate it standing. And it tasted so good that he took another. But he didn't have time to finish it. He was due at his doctor's at two, and he had to drive to the other end of town. He dove through the crowded cafeteria, crossed to his office, and hurried to the street corner where his car was parked. He despised the idea of a "chauffeur"; he could drive his own automobile. He unlocked the wheel, climbed into his seat, and reached into his pocket for one of his big cigars. He usually took a few puffs to get it going well before he "stepped on the gas." To-day, the first few puffs seemed to poison him. Sweat broke out on his forehead; he felt dizzy again. Like a boy with his first smoke. And then, with a rush, his sense of panic returned. How was he going to drive this big car through all the heavy noon traffic? Here, at the wheel, while he was in the midst of a jam, he might get dizzy again, he might faint—he might— Hadn't he heard of some man found dead at the steering-wheel? Perhaps if he had another drink he could do it. But he couldn't face O'Connor a second time. He climbed out of his car. He'd have to go by trolley until he came to a taxi stand.

By the time he had found a taxi it was after two.

He was in an agony of exasperation and hurry. Suppose the doctor didn't wait for him and took some other patient in his place. He fretted; he fidgeted. He was in such a hurry that he finally left the taxi when it was held up for a moment by the red traffic signal, and almost ran the remaining half block to the doctor's office. When he got there he was breathless, quivering; his knees were weak, and his head seemed throbbing with waves of increasing pressure. He was fifteen minutes late, but the doctor saw him at once. He was a rather important man.

Now as soon as Mr. Edwards found himself sitting opposite to his physician in his quiet inner office, he suddenly felt as if, somehow, he had been making a fool of himself. Moreover, he was that type of patient who refuses to tell the doctor anything because he feels that he is paying the doctor to find out what is the matter with him, and has no intention of making his job too easy. And so Mr. Edwards did not tell his physician a single fact of vital importance; he told him nothing about the mental shock of the rejected insurance application, nothing about his fears, nothing about the drink of whiskey, or the hurried luncheon, or the rush to get to the doctor in time for his appointment. In other words, he gave his medical man not a single one of the important facts necessary for a sound judgment; he asked him to find the answer to a complex scientific problem while concealing from him all the most important equations and fac-

tors. And yet he expected this same doctor to make no mistakes.

"Oh, it's nothing much, I dare say, doctor," was what he did say. "Just lack of pep. Sort of lost interest in things. And I've been a little dizzy occasionally. Probably smoking too strong cigars. So I wish you'd just run over me and see if, by any chance, there is anything wrong."

During the examination that followed Mr. Edwards kept his eyes fixed on a sort of unrolled rubber cuff, with rubber tubes attached to it, that lay on the doctor's desk. He knew what it was. He wanted, above all things, to know what it said. And yet, somehow, he was afraid of it. Afraid of what it *might* say.

"I don't find anything very wrong," said the doctor, as Edwards sat up on the couch. "Pulse rather full and rapid, though. I'll just take your blood-pressure."

This was what Edwards knew was coming; what he wanted, and what he dreaded. As the little cuff was wrapped round his arm he felt his head get full and a pricking tension at the back of his neck; and when the doctor pumped it full of air, and he felt the constriction on the blood vessels of his arm, it seemed as if his brain were going to burst. The doctor let the air out of the cuff in little puffs. Then he blew it up once more and watched more carefully the quivering dial of the little watch-like indicator.

Edwards tried to swallow, but his throat was dry.

"Pretty high, isn't it, doctor?" he said, in a voice that he tried to make level and indifferent.

Perhaps the doctor then made a mistake. Perhaps if he had told his patient the exact truth, things might have been different. But he had no means of knowing that Edwards had been mentally disturbed about his blood-pressure. And he didn't want to worry him.

"Higher than it ought to be," he answered. "Now, Mr. Edwards, I want you to let up a little on your daily round of work. Go a bit slower. Take a good long holiday. Above all, don't rush and dash so. Don't run after trolley-cars, and where you can, don't walk, but ride. I'll want to see you again in a few days. It may be wise to have you go into our hospital for a while so that we can go over you more thoroughly. Your digestive processes are upset, I'm sure. And now, before you go, step into my laboratory and leave a specimen with my assistant. There are some things that we can rule out at once."

Edwards hesitated. He was bitterly disappointed. He wanted definite clean-cut information about his physical condition; now, at once. And he was getting nothing. Yet somehow he could not, he simply could not, tell his physician—a member of his own club whom he had known all his life—he could not tell him what he wanted to know and why. Only one question really interested him. He wanted

to demand, to shout out, "Am I going to die? And how soon will it be? I'm afraid, and I want to know." But he must get some information. He caught at a suggestion in the doctor's last words.

"What can you rule out?"

"Well, with a high blood-pressure, the urinary analysis will doubtless rule out any serious kidney disease. I'll let you know our laboratory findings in a day or two. Meanwhile, go slow."

Edwards stood on the doctor's doorstep, looking up and down the street. His own house was not two squares away. Yet how strange the familiar place looked.

So it was his kidneys. He remembered an uncle who had died of "Bright's," died in convulsions.

He started to walk home. But at the first corner he began to feel a pressure, a heaviness in his chest; it pushed up on his heart, and he had a sort of burning pain there. His head began to throb; he felt dizzy. People would say he was drunk. Another wave of panic swept over him. Was he going to die here, suddenly, in the street, all alone? With no one to call on for help? He staggered into the corner drug store, and collapsed in a chair.

"My name," he muttered to the old gray-haired clerk, "is James Edwards—live around the corner.—I'm dying."

The old clerk made him drink some aromatic spirits of ammonia, and sent the errand-boy to walk home with him.

"Dying?" remarked the old clerk to the rows of bottles in his little cubbyhole of a prescription department. "Not much." (He had pernicious anemia himself, and he knew what dying meant.) "Looks to me like some kind of auto-intoxication—alcohol, food that he can't digest, or something like that. He looked sort of poisoned."

Which was quite true. For James Edwards *was* poisoned—poisoned by fear.

CHAPTER II

POISONED BY FEAR

It was only three o'clock when James Edwards let himself noiselessly into his house. Not for twenty-odd years had he been at home so early in the day. He did not want to frighten his wife and upset the household. His real reason, however, for stealing in so silently was a desire to avoid being asked questions, combined with the instinct of the terrified animal to get into familiar, safe surroundings. He wanted to be at home, but he didn't want anyone to talk to him. At the telephone in the hall, he called up his office. He wouldn't be back again that afternoon. No, nothing was wrong. Someone had better drive his car to the garage. As he hung up the receiver he became conscious of the sound of voices in the big "parlor" on his right, a sort of "state apartment," seldom used and generally dim and silent. His wife must be having some kind of a party. But at what an unusual time! In the hall lay a number of wraps. There must be a dozen guests. The shadowy hall, the murmur of voices, quieted him a little. He sat listening, slightly relaxed for the first time in hours. He heard his wife's high-pitched tones; she was using her "com-

pany accent," her "bastard anglomaniac Bostonese," as he often called it, because it made him so furious. Even now it stirred him as an intolerable affectation. She'd never talked like that when she was in high school, with a grocer for a father. He paid no attention to what she was saying. When she talked that way he instinctively stopped his ears.

But now another voice was speaking. The full, round tones, the clear enunciation, the suggestion of controlled power, roused his interest. He could hear every word, except when the other women's voices interrupted.

"There is no such thing as illness, no such thing as pain, or death," the voice was saying. "All the infirmities of our humanity have no objective existence. They are the results of the false claims, or the wrong thinkings of our minds, that have been taught since childhood to believe in pain and disease as if they were realities. Our sainted Foundress—the last great Incarnation of Divine Love, the mere repetition of whose name sets in motion healing and calming vibrations, and from whose secluded temple in the New Hampshire hills, streams of strengthening thought flowed out—it is she whose teaching——"

Another voice interrupted with a question. But Edwards was already on his way upstairs.

"No such thing as pain—no such thing as death," he murmured to himself. If he could believe that! He remembered now, vaguely, that his wife had

told him that she was "thinking of taking up 'Constructive Thought.'" He must ask her about it. Perhaps that would help him. At the head of the stairs he began to puff a little; the old sense of oppression in his chest came on again; he felt that same burning pain in his heart. Something seemed to be pressing, pressing down on him; he couldn't breathe.

"There is no such thing as pain," he repeated, as he stumbled into his bedroom, and sat down on the bed. "No such thing as death." Then, as the sense of oppression eased up a little, he squared his shoulders. Another reprieve! IT wasn't coming this time anyhow. He got up and walked on tiptoe into his wife's room, unlocking the connecting door that had been closed now for the past four years. Perhaps he might find the book that he had seen her reading now and then of an evening. And he must do something to pass the time. It was intolerable to be at home at three o'clock with nothing to do but think, and think, and think about One Thing.

"I'm not afraid of death exactly," he said half aloud, as his hand clasped the thick black book on the table by his wife's bed. "If I were told that I'd be shot to-morrow at eight, I'd arrange my affairs and face it. But it's not *knowing* that gets me. It's the expecting something all the time—something that I don't understand. It's having to stop my work at the office, give up all my plans, leave my work half done, make a general mess of everything

somehow. It's the uncertainty. It's—it's—feeling so alone—and so helpless."

An hour later he heard the women downstairs leaving. In a moment he had put back the borrowed book and relocked the communicating door. Not for worlds would he have had his wife know that he had unlocked that door. She might not understand. She might even imagine— But she had already caught a glimpse of someone sitting in her husband's room, always empty at this hour. She stood on the threshold staring at him.

"Land's sake alive," she exclaimed, her shrill voice running up five notes of the chromatic scale. "Why, whatever is the matter? Nothing wrong with the business, is there?"

Her husband's eyes, that had been resting on her for a moment, welcoming her coming, dropped; he turned away his head. So she had no thought for him, only for his work that made money for her, that gave her comfort, and position, and freedom.

"Oh, no," he answered dully. "I just wasn't feeling exactly well, and I thought I'd come home early." Then, as she turned away, apparently uninterested, he added, "You don't seem to care very much."

"Well, why should I?" she said, turning in the doorway. "You've always been so touchy and growly if anyone ever asked you how you felt. And you've never taken much interest in all my sickness."

"But, Minnie," his voice had a wistful, almost pleading note, that surprised but did not touch her. "I thought you believed that there wasn't any such thing as sickness or pain. As I came in I heard someone in the parlor saying——"

Her face lit up with pleased interest.

"Oh, that was our 'Constructive Thought' teacher, Mrs. Downing. Ain't she wonderful?"

Her husband nodded. Then he stood up and came closer to his wife, putting a hand on her plump arm.

"It's true, then, is it, Minnie?" he asked. "About death, I mean. You're not afraid of dying? Wouldn't be, even if you knew that you might have to—have to die to-night?"

She drew abruptly away from him. Her eyes lit up with a furtive, anxious look, that matched the expression of her husband's.

"Don't say that word," she protested. "You know how I can't even bear to read the de—the funeral notices in the paper. And what's that got to do with me anyhow?" Then, with a sudden side-long glance at herself in the looking-glass on her husband's dressing-table, she added rather breathlessly, "I don't look sick, do I? My skin looks all right, don't it?" She rubbed her lips roughly with her pocket-handkerchief, and stared again into the glass. "That's the worst of rouge," she muttered; "your lips might be blue under it."

"Oh, you look first rate," her husband answered

wearily. "I think I'll rest a little until dinner time."

And for three hours he lay on his bed, trying to rest, but getting more and more tense, more and more restive every moment. At supper he spoke very little. His wife kept talking of her anxiety about her own health; and, for the first time, he listened to her with some sympathy.

"You'd ought to go in for 'Constructive Thought,' James," she said, as she got up from the table. "It sort of rests you. And, of course, if you get *really* sick, you can have a doctor. Only you must try not to believe in him too much."

Human beings have a wonderful power of adaptation. No matter what happens, life has to go on; and the individual has to go on with it. The murderer, condemned to die within a month, gradually accustoms himself to the idea. He sleeps and eats, and reads and smokes. And so, James Edwards, fearful and panicky as he was, gradually grew accustomed to the fear-thoughts that haunted him. He bent his shoulders and took up the burden of the Old Man of the Sea, which he must carry, it appeared, in addition to the usual burdens of his daily life. So, that evening, he forgot himself for a few hours in an exciting novel. It was only when he went up to bed that the old sense of panic reasserted itself.

He had always been rather particular about his own things; everything had to be in its own place. He liked to lay his clothes on a chair by his bedside,

to have everything ready for the next morning. To-night, as he undressed, he was obsessed by a new fear.

Suppose that IT should come upon him while he slept! How often he had read of men having been found dead in bed! But there were worse things than that, even. Suppose he should have what they called "a stroke" in the middle of the night; he might be partially paralyzed, so that he could not call out for help. And he would have to lie there helpless in the dark through all the long night hours, unable to call his wife or to get the doctor. He might even die like that, all alone, and in the dark. He was putting the studs into a fresh shirt and placing it ready for to-morrow. Suppose that there should never be any to-morrow—for him. Perhaps he might never be able to put that shirt on. Nevertheless he arranged his fresh linen with unusual care, folding the sleeves of the shirt in exact lines, so that one sleeve lay exactly parallel with the other, and placing his boots under the chair that held his clothes so that the heels were on the same straight line. He didn't know exactly why he took all this trouble, wasted all this time. In reality he was unconsciously trying to postpone the evil hour when he should have to get into bed, turn out the light, and face the long hours of the night. He got into bed at last. But once there, he suddenly realized that if he were taken ill in the night he had no means of summoning help. He had never been willing to

have an electric bell put in his room. He needed no valet, no servant to help *him* to dress. And the house telephone was in a far corner on his desk, the whole width of the room from his bed. He could never get to it in time if he were taken ill. But his wife's room had bells; her telephone was by her bedside. She never got up until ten or after, and she'd talk to her women friends on the telephone for hours while she lay there among her pillows.

Edwards got up and went to the communicating door. Luckily the key was on his side. He turned it softly. No need of waking his wife if he could help it. He pushed the door softly ajar. If he could leave it half open, then if anything happened in the night, at least he could call to his wife. But the unused hinges squeaked. Mrs. Edwards, sitting up in her big bed, with *Illusion and Reality* in her hand, dropped the book and gave a suppressed scream.

"Why, Jimmie," she said, after a moment's silence; "why, how you startled me!" She moved sideways, evidently expecting him to sit down on the bedside. And it was years since she had called him "Jimmie." A new panic, a shamefaced desire to escape at any price, came over Edwards.

"It was so hot in my room," he stammered. "I thought, if you didn't mind, I'd just leave the door on the jar. I—I hope I didn't frighten you." And then, as an afterthought, he added, "my dear."

His wife's attitude changed in a second. She flounced around among her pillows.

"Stuff and nonsense," she snorted. "You know well enough how light I sleep, and how easily anything wakes me. And I've just *got* to get my rest. What, leave that door open, while you snort and tumble and groan in your sleep? Why, I wouldn't get a wink all night. It isn't hot at all." She stretched out a commanding finger. "Now you go straight back to your room and shut that door tight."

Edwards obeyed. But, as a forlorn hope, he left the door just a little open. He had scarcely got into bed when he heard his wife's voice: "James, do you hear me? Shut that door *tight!* The light is streaming right into my eyes from your room. What has got into you to-night anyway?"

Edwards obeyed and crept back to his bed. He lay there awake. After an hour he got up, and tiptoed to the communicating door. His wife's light was out; he opened the door slightly. She did not move. He knew that unless that door was at least partially open he simply could *not* go to sleep. And, anyway, he would set his alarm clock, and wake up early so as to close and lock it again before his wife awoke.

But even after the door was partly open, and he could hear his wife's heavy breathing (he grunt? Good Lord, and what did she call the noises she was making?) he lay there tense and sleepless. So long as he was awake he had some control over what might happen. But once asleep, he was powerless to defend himself from the something that

might be coming nearer and nearer to him in the darkness.

Sleep is an important element in human life. And his fear had begun to poison its rest and peace. He was afraid, now, to go to sleep.

From this first night Edwards afterward dated the beginning of all his troubles. After at last falling into an uneasy doze, he was wakened about three o'clock by a sense of appalling oppression. He could not breathe; his heart was strangely irregular. One minute it would beat rapidly; then it would seem to skip a beat, and finally to slow down, as if it were going to stop beating altogether. IT had come. Edwards was dying! He was sure of that. And he was horribly afraid. A nightmare-like hour or two followed. He tottered into his wife's room to tell her that he was dying; the house was roused; the doctor called, who seemed to Edwards almost as confused and scared as himself. But, somehow, after a quieting hypodermic, Edwards had fallen asleep. And next day, by noon, he was at his office again. Somehow he simply could not remain at home. And he soon discovered that while he was hard at work, mentally occupied, he felt better; or rather he did not feel at all. But as soon as the evening meal was over, and he had to face the night, his self-confidence dropped from him; he was like a frightened child. Yet of all this he never spoke to a soul. Remembering how that one drink of alcohol in O'Connor's office had

once helped him, he had O'Connor get him some rye from a bootlegger, and he took a drink sometimes before he went to bed. For he needed courage to get into bed. He could never tell whether he should get through the night without a "spell." And gradually he developed a long complicated ritual of undressing, which was a sort of unconscious magical protection and which, if properly carried out, would ensure him a good night. Not that he reasoned this all out. But if he did not carefully arrange his clothes on the chair in a certain manner, he had an uneasy feeling that "something might happen" in the night. He developed also obsessive ideas about numbers. "Three" had always been an "unlucky number" for him. It was on the third of the month that he had received that letter of rejection from the insurance company. But "18" appeared to him as "lucky." On his way downtown he would look at the numbers on motor cars, or on trolleys; if he saw "3's" or "13's" he would feel uneasy, while the sight of an "18" or a "9" would give him a sense of confidence. So in getting to bed, in arranging his watch or his purse on his dressing-table, he began to feel that it was unlucky if he touched any one of these objects three times. To avoid this he would touch each one eighteen times. That seemed to make everything right, and to rid him of the sense of tense anxiety which the mere idea of the number "3" always produced. Then, too, when not at the office his mind was so constantly on himself that he

became uncertain about many of his habitual half-conscious physical actions. He had grown uneasy about sounds in the night in the house—burglars perhaps—and he would go all over the house before bedtime, trying each door and often each window. But when he had locked the front door and started upstairs, he would become doubtful as to whether he had really locked the door, and would go downstairs and lock it again, only to repeat the same process a few moments later. Sometimes he went up and down stairs four times before his mind was at rest. But all these things he carefully concealed, or thought that he did. Gradually he was building up a fear-ridden life of his own that lay within the confines of his regular life, but which was daily extending its boundaries and encroaching more and more on his routine activities. Within a month of his first "night attack" it would take him over an hour to get to bed, and his night ritual was extending and developing all the time. When the morning came, all his fears, or most of them, had fled; he would curse himself for a fool, and resolve that, that night, he would simply throw off his clothes and jump into bed, as he used to do. But, with nightfall, all the old fears returned. He was powerless against the demands of his touchings, his arrangings, his whole complex of carefully performed little actions, all of which simply *had* to be gone through with if he were to sleep at all. If sometimes, in haste, he neglected or forgot any one of them, he

would have to get out of bed and go through the whole ritual again.

Of course, after his first night attack, his physician had insisted on his going into the local hospital for examination. He had spent a week of torment there. They had taken his blood-pressure three times a day. He knew just when the interne was coming to take it; and he would lie in bed tense with anxiety. At first he would ask the interne casually about the results; but evidently the young doctor had his orders. "Oh, it's not so high to-day," or, "You needn't worry," was about all that Edwards ever got out of him. So he tried all sorts of tricks in order to get hold of his "chart." He knew where it hung in the nurses' office. Once he stole in there on tiptoe and was caught by the interne, fussing among the patients' records.

"It must be terribly high," he would say to himself. "If it was all right, they'd tell me. They're afraid to tell me how high it is."

He was right, in a way. His physician was really trying not to frighten him. How could he know what his patient's real mental condition was? Edwards had never told him anything. For he was as utterly ashamed of his fear-reactions, of his rituals, of his obsessions, as a sensitive child is of its day-dreams and of the hidden games that it plays by itself. So, after a week, his physician, with two white-coated internes, had gathered round his bed, and the older man had said:

"We're going to let you go home to-morrow. Now do let up on your work a little. Take up golf, or get some regular exercise. And then, this summer, take a real holiday—three months somewhere where letters and the telephone can't reach you."

"But—but," stammered Edwards, who had been for days looking forward with dread to this interview; "then, there won't be any operation—or—anything—serious?"

"Why, no," the doctor answered, in a tone of surprise. "Who ever imagined any such thing? Your digestion is out of kilter; you're full of gas and too much acid. But your heart, your lungs and your kidneys are all right."

Edwards wanted to ask about his blood-pressure. But somehow he couldn't. He was conscious of a sense of irritation, almost of anger. What was the use of these doctors if they couldn't find out anything?

"Then, what in hell *is* the matter with me anyhow?" he broke out.

"Why, I've told you that your organs are sound. At least, they are now. If you take life a little easier you'll be all right. Drop in at my office occasionally and let me look you over."

When the doctors had gone Edwards lay there grinding his teeth with rage. They'd as much as said that there was "nothing the matter" with him. But they'd added, "Not at present." Nothing the mat-

ter with him, eh? Then what about all those peculiar feelings he had in his stomach—all those strange little pains and burnings around his heart, that funny sense of fullness at the base of his skull? Why, a month ago, he hadn't known that he *had* a heart. And now, he was conscious of it all the time, except when he was working at the office. Nothing the matter with him? Well, he knew better. And those doctors—a bunch of fakes! Either they did not know what was the matter—hadn't been able to find out, in spite of all their examinations and laboratories, and were just trying to cover up their ignorance—or else, there *was* something wrong, something very serious—so serious that even an operation was hopeless—and they were afraid to tell him. That was the way doctors did. If they didn't know enough to find out what the matter was, they pretended that everything was all right; and if they did find out and it was serious, then they "spared the patient" and said that everything was "all right" again. It was only when you had something simple, something easy to discover, something that the doctors could cure—that was it—only then you got the truth. In his case, probably, they knew they couldn't cure him.

So he left the hospital, worse, far more suspicious of his medical advisers, far less self-confident, than when he had entered it. Of course, he did try to "go slow." He borrowed his wife's chauffeur to drive his car. He had a bell put in his bedroom and

had the telephone moved close to his bed. He tried to leave the office at two. But he didn't know what to do with himself then. How could he play golf? How dared he? He, take all that exercise with his high blood-pressure? Hadn't he heard once of a man who dropped dead on the links?

He began to lose weight. For he had cut out one kind of food after another, avoiding meat because it made "too much blood," and starchy vegetables because they made him feel "bloated" and might bring on one of his "night attacks." He had one of these about once a month, but none of them as severe as the first one. Yet he never laid his head on the pillow at night without expecting and fearing that dreadful sense of oppression, that panic of approaching death.

He became uneasy, too, when he was alone. Uneasy, also, when he was in a crowd or at a theater. Suppose he should have an attack—suppose IT should suddenly come—while he was all alone on the street or in a crowded theater where he could not get out into the fresh air. At first he could sit through a "movie" if he had an aisle seat, and knew just where the exit was. But very soon even this knowledge did not help. As for traveling—especially at night, shut into one of those lower berths —why, it was out of the question. Once during the year of his torment he simply had to go to Chicago. He took the whole drawing-room on the sleeping car. This meant that he had to let his clerk take

for him his usual lower berth, and then slip down to the station long before the train started to get the drawing-room. For hours before, he sweated and shivered for fear that he might find the drawing-room already taken. And he had had to lie to his wife and his clerk to keep them from coming to the station with him; had to assure them that he felt so much better that he didn't need anyone. Better? He was feeling worse than ever. As for that day in Chicago, it had been a torment. Suppose something happened to him while he was driving round in a taxi? Who knew him there? Why, he might be taken unconscious to some hospital, put into the paupers' ward—or even lie unrecognized at the morgue. All the time that he was in Chicago he held clasped in his hand one of his visiting cards, on which he had written: "In case of accident, please take me to the Cecil Hotel, and notify the following persons." This gave him a slight sense of security.

And so, month followed month. He had occasional periods of new hope. He consulted an osteopath, and happened upon a clever man whose manipulations lessened his muscular tension, and gave him some temporary relief. During the day. But his nights were as bad as ever. It took him an hour and a half to get to bed now.

He had, of course, tried all sorts of medicines that he had seen advertised or heard about. He heard of yeast, and ate so much of it that he made

himself sick. And he got hold of numerous laxatives and purgatives. For naturally his elimination had become inadequate; and he, who until then had been as "regular as a clock" all his life, fussed and fumed and let his entire day be influenced by the activity or non-activity of his intestines.

Summer was coming on. And although he talked of a long holiday he had no intention of leaving his office. What! go away somewhere all alone—for his wife went to Atlantic City and he couldn't stand that "merry-go-round"—to where he wouldn't know anybody, and couldn't even have the few comparatively happy hours of the day that he spent now at his work!

He was on the high road to real danger of some kind. He thought that he was near the end of that road, although, in reality, he had not yet walked far upon it.

Whether a real psychosis, a true depressive mental illness, may be developed from fear-reactions alone, may be questioned. Yet surely, Edwards, if he kept on, would soon be, at least, a hopeless "habitual invalid." And some real depression with mental blocking, with inability to concentrate or decide, with obsessions of unworthiness or of unforgivable sin, with suicidal temptations at the end of it—might supervene in this personality already so poisoned, so weakened, by distrust and fear. Besides all this, the physical results of the fear were plain enough. Not only the impaired digestion, but, far

more dangerous, the vicious circle of his blood-pressure phobia. For the more he worried about his blood-pressure, the higher he forced it, the more strain he put upon the heart and vessels; and the higher the pressure, the more he worried and the more frightened he became. Something had to happen, finally, one way or another.

Exactly why Edwards took or was made to take one turning, instead of another, cannot be discussed here. In later days he used to think that, somehow, the love of his dead mother had reached out to protect him.

At any rate, in June, after Edwards had been persistently poisoned by his fears for many months, his son came home from the University, where he was preparing his doctor's dissertation in physics. He was not a very discerning young man, immersed as he was in his own peculiar interests. But he had not been in the house a day before he realized that something was wrong with his father. Then—for beneath his shy, studious exterior he hid a real affection for his parents—he approached the matter as he was accustomed to approach a physical problem, and first got together his "data." On some pretext he took his mother out for a drive, drove her to his father's office, slipped up to Mr. O'Connor whom he had known since boyhood, and, without his father's knowledge, brought O'Connor down to the car in which his mother sat. He drove these two rather mystified people to a quiet end of the

public park, shut off the engine, turned round from the wheel to face them, and said:

"Now, you two know my father better than most people. What is the matter with him? I have a right to know."

Mrs. Edwards spoke first. She didn't mince matters. In fact, she was glad of a chance to unburden her own mind, for of late she too had been afraid—afraid of her husband.

"Tom," she burst out, "he's losing his mind—going crazy. That's what I think. You've no idea of the funny things he does. He thinks I don't notice them. But I do. He imagines that burglars are going to get into the house; every night he wanders round for half an hour, shutting all the doors and windows. And pretending that he goes down to look at the furnace. Or the electric meter. And before he goes to bed—why, he acts just like a crazy man. I've peeked through the door, and I've seen him spend fifteen minutes counting the things on his bureau, touching each one with his finger, or else moving the chairs in the room to make them stand just so, or arranging his socks in straight lines. I tell you, it makes me creepy to look at him. He'll go off his head some day, you see if he don't. And me sleeping right next to him! And would you believe it, he won't let me lock the communicating door. Gets up in the night and unlocks it on the sly. You must see what that means. Crazy people always turn against those they once loved. And

some night he's going to come into my room, with a revolver, or a knife—to—to——"

"Nonsense, mother," her son interposed. But his mother turned to O'Connor at her side.

"Is it nonsense, Mr. O'Connor?" she demanded. "You've seen him at the office. You know how he has changed."

O'Connor nodded slowly. He was naturally as slow of speech as Mrs. Edwards was voluble.

"I don't like to criticize the boss," he began. "He's been a good friend to me. But—during the past few months—I have noticed——"

"There, Tom, what did I tell you?" Mrs. Edwards interposed.

Tom held up his hand.

"Do be quiet, mother." Then, to O'Connor, "I want to help him, Mr. O'Connor. He needs help, I feel sure. Do be frank with me. You can serve him in no better way."

"Well, Master Tom," O'Connor said, weighing each word, "I can say one thing right now. He isn't going crazy. For, changed though he may be, he's as good a business man as ever. He don't make any mistakes, or decide things wrong, or fuss and fume over insignificant details. He's just as efficient as he ever was—as a business man. That part of his mind is all right anyhow. Why, it's only the men at the plant, like myself, who come into some personal contact with him, who realize that he has changed at all. Just the same, he *is* different. He's

jumpy; he's shaky; he breaks out into sudden sweats. Sometimes he looks pale, as if he'd had a bad night. And he's sort of—sort of suspicious. Not of me, or of people. But of something—I don't know what. He has been working us all terribly hard at the office of late; he works himself hard too. But he has to push himself. You can see that. He reminds me of a boy who whistles when he's going through a dark wood, so as to keep his courage up.—Now, I hate to say this. But I'll tell you what I think the trouble is.—I think he's begun to—to drink.—Not with others, you understand. But by himself. I've known men at his age do that, and go all to pieces after a while. So far it hasn't done his mind much harm; he's efficient yet, I tell you. But it will get him in the end. At first I did think that he had—had got into some sort of trouble." He gave Mrs. Edwards a side glance, took his courage in both hands and went on: "Something he might have done when he'd been—been drinking.—You know what I mean—some woman."

"Utterly preposterous, Mr. O'Connor." Mrs. Edwards threw up her head defiantly. Then she hesitated for a moment. "And yet, I don't know," she added, half to herself. "That would explain some things.—But not all.—The real trouble is that he's not sane——"

Young Edwards turned back to the steering-wheel.

"Thanks to you both," he said. "You may both

be right, or both wrong. Anyhow, something has got to be done. And I'm going to try to do it."

That night, while his mother was out at the theater, he was sitting with his father in the little back room that the family called the library.

"Dad," he began. And he could not help noticing how his father started and put down his paper with an unsteady hand. "I want to talk with you a minute."

The older man stared at his son, his forehead wrinkled in tense displeasure. Something disagreeable was coming, he thought. What had the boy been up to now? Why couldn't they leave him alone? He gave his son no encouragement. But Tom, flushing a little, set his lips in a line of determination, strangely like his father's, and went on.

"I've just had a letter from the University. I'm offered an instructor's place in our summer school. Five hundred dollars for six weeks' work."

"Humph," grunted the father, pleased and relieved, yet not intending to show it. "Going to take it? And leave us before you've been home a week?"

"That," answered Tom, "will depend on you. Now don't say anything until I've explained things. You see, Dad, I shouldn't be any use at the kind of work I'm doing unless I had inherited one of your characteristics—the determination to use my own mind, my own senses, and to take nothing on

the say-so of others. To gather my facts for myself, to test them out, and then to make my own decisions."

Edwards put down his paper and leaned forward. This was all very unusual. Yet it pleased him somehow. And it had been years since his son had called him "Dad." But he was still suspicious.

"You've never asked much about my life at the University these last three years. I thought you weren't interested, so I have never said much. It was wrong of me, I think. For, at the bottom of your heart, Dad, you do care, don't you?"

Tom's intuition was serving him far better than he knew. This repressed, hard father of his, although he himself did not realize it, was hungry for affection and was proud of his son. Now he began to relax even more; a feeling of emotional rest crept over him. Still he said nothing. He only nodded. But the son understood.

"You see, Dad," Tom went on, "I live in the dormitory of the Graduate School. And next to me lives one of the younger professors of our medical faculty. I dare say you don't know it, but the fact is our medical school is one of the best known, one of the greatest, if not the greatest, in this country. Of course, Harvard men wouldn't admit that, but that's what *we* think. Now, this professor—Langly his name is—has got to be a friend of mine. He's shown me all through our big hospital. And I've heard him talk about the big men—the doctors

with a world-wide reputation—who teach and work there. And especially about one of these men—the one that they all call the 'Chief.' "

"Thinking of switching over to medicine, are you?" the father interrupted. The son shook his head.

"Not for a moment. But I want you to understand where I get my information—why I know what I'm talking about. Now, for something else. Yesterday, I dropped in to see our own doctor here, Dr. Willis, who has known me since boyhood."

"You aren't sick, are you, Tom?" interposed the father abruptly. His fear-poisoned mind was off at a tangent at once. So that was it. This boy of his had developed some serious illness; all his work was to go for nothing and there would be hospital bills, and doctor's bills—and—and—the boy might—might die.

"Dad, you aren't listening to what I'm saying," he heard his son protest. "Don't be afraid. I didn't——"

"Who said I was afraid?" The older man's voice was rough and rude. Tom gave him a quick look. He was beginning to get some faint understanding of the situation.

"No one. Surely not I.—Why, you've never been afraid of anyone, or anything, have you?" Then, without waiting for the answer that seemed somewhat long in coming, he hurried on. "I always see

Dr. Willis when I come home. Just for a general going-over."

"But if you've got such good doctors where you live—" interposed his father, the old look of suspicion coming into his eyes again.

"We have. But, you see, Dr. Willis has always known me. I don't have to explain so many things to him. Well, he didn't find anything wrong with me. But he—he—" The son hesitated. He had come to the most difficult part of his task. He plunged bravely on. "But he wasn't at all satisfied about—about you."

The father flared out, thumping the arm of his chair.

"Damn all doctors!" he cried. "Why can't he keep his mouth shut? Doesn't he know that a doctor hasn't any right to tell tales? Breach of confidence, that's what it is."

"But, Dad, it was I who asked him. Even then he didn't want to tell me much. I made him."

"Couldn't tell you much anyway, even if he wanted to. He doesn't know anything. None of them do." Then, as his son said nothing, he added, with a suggestion of tense anxiety that he could not conceal, "Well, what *did* he say? Nothing much wrong with me, I guess. Only need a change—and not to work so hard. As if I could change all my ways at my time of life." Still his son said nothing, realizing his advantage, and the father, more and more uneasy, jumped up and began to pace the

room nervously. "Go on, tell me. What did he say? I know he's been hiding something from me all these months. Afraid to tell me. Did he tell you?" His voice almost broke. "For God's sake, Tom, what *did* he say?"

The son got up too, slipped his arm through his father's, and walked with him up and down the room. The touch of his boy's hand seemed to quiet the older man. After a few moments he looked up into his son's eyes.

"All right, Tom," he said. "I can stand it, I guess. So shoot."

Tom guided his father back to his chair, made him sit down, and he himself sat on the side of it, with one arm thrown round his father's bent shoulders.

"What an infernal shame," he said, half to himself. "I had no idea how you felt.—Only, do listen, and do believe *me*. Even if you don't believe the doctor.—I've no bad news for you. Do get that. No bad news.—Dr. Willis is anxious about you. He says that he and his hospital colleagues can't put their fingers on any one thing that is organically wrong. And yet, he says, almost all your functions are out of gear. I guess you must be like a watch that isn't keeping good time. The jeweler says that all the wheels are there and the mainspring is intact, and yet the watch isn't functioning right somehow. It doesn't run accurately. Dr. Willis says, too, that you're not an easy patient to manage; you want

to do everything your own way, and you won't believe anything that you can't see or put some name to. 'If I'd told your father,' he said, 'that he was suffering from neurasthenia, or that he was psychasthenic, why he'd have felt more satisfied. But what is the good of saying a thing in Greek or Latin words when you can put it in English?' Then he explained that there was one element in your condition that worried him, but which he couldn't account for. He felt that this thing, whatever it is—he wouldn't tell me what—will do you serious harm in the end, unless it can be stopped. Only, he doesn't know what causes it—he admitted that quite frankly—and he doesn't know how to check it. So, when I told him about my plan——"

"Your plan?" Edwards was tense again, and suspicious. His son's words had brought back the old panic state with a rush. He knew well enough what the doctor meant. That blood-pressure that was pounding, pounding at the back of his head, this very minute. And now, what was all this that his son was talking about? He felt Tom's arm tighten about his shoulders.

"Quiet and easy, Dad." The boy's voice was close to his ear, and for a moment it soothed him, made him feel less alone. "I've worked it all out. And please—please, for my sake—do what I ask. Dr. Willis said it was the only sensible thing to do.—Look, Dad, I'm going to accept this summer-school job; that means that I must go back to the uni-

versity this week. And you are going with me. Get that. There won't be any trouble. We can travel——"

Edwards interrupted him abruptly.

"Travel? All that way East? Why I—why I—" The mere word "travel" had sent his thoughts off on another tangent. He remembered his hideous journey to Chicago sitting up all night because he was afraid to lie down in his berth, afraid to close the door of the drawing-room compartment where he was, by his own choice, all alone. And that had been only for one night. Besides, in Chicago he was not utterly unknown. But to go East to an absolutely strange city, where he knew nobody at all! Why, what would he do there? Why go there anyway?

Tom's eyes were on his father's face. He was beginning, very vaguely, to understand; and even the little that he understood filled him with an intense pity, mingled with irritation, because those men who should have shielded his father had allowed him to get into such a "hideous mess" as this.

"There's no good of objecting, Dad. You may be angry with me, but I also saw Mr. O'Connor at the Plant. He says that this is a slack time anyhow. You can easily be away for a month, or even more. And then, remember, you're not going to be bothered with any preparations. And you won't be alone. I'll be with you on the train. And,

what's more, my little suite in the dormitory is big enough for two. I'll have a bed put up there for you. Of course, the summer school will be on—a lot of wild women, mostly school-teachers—but they won't bother you. I'll see to that. And I've telegraphed my friend Dr. Langly to make an appointment for you on Monday of next week, an appointment with the 'Chief.' They tell me that people come to him from all over this country, people whose troubles haven't been or couldn't be discovered and treated by their home doctors. And he cures them."

"Tommy," the father's voice was almost wistful, and his hand patted his son's knee, "Tommy, I couldn't. They'd put me into a hospital. There'd be sick people and dying people around me. I'd see some of them being wheeled off to the operating rooms; and, sometimes, never coming back. Oh, I used to watch and keep count. Perhaps they'd want to cut me up. Once you get into a hospital, Tommy —once you get into their hands—it's terrible hard to get out again."

"You won't be in a hospital at all, Dad. You'll be, if you need treatment and have to be separated from me, you'll be in what they call a Nursing Home. You'll have your own comfortable room, just as comfortable and homelike as this. You'll be free to come and go as you please, within the limits of your cure. You'll have, if you need one, a sensible, jolly nurse."

"Oh, Lord, Tommy, I had one in the hospital here. She near drove me mad. Always trying to be 'my sunshine,' patting me on the shoulder, and trying to read me books all about sweetness and light."

"You may not need one at all. Anyhow, I know several of our women. And they're not like that. Besides, these are details. What I want most is to get you thoroughly examined by a great medical authority. Then we'll know, for once, exactly where we stand."

"If I thought this big doctor of yours really knew anything, Tommy—perhaps I might. But he's probably like all the rest. Got some little ideas of his own and a few fancy modern fixings. But under the surface it's all the same useless guesswork."

Tom reached over to the library table and took from it a very fat book that looked like a dictionary.

"I'm not asking you to take my word for anything, Dad," he answered. "I'm going to give you first-hand information. Look here. I borrowed this book from Dr. Willis' waiting-room. It's the new *Who's Who in Medicine* for 1926. Every physician of any importance is listed here. Look, here is our Dr. Willis. See how much room he takes up? Four lines. And now look here. Here's the name of the man that I want you to see. He takes up a whole page. Now, just put on your glasses, read that page through, and then—then talk to me."

Edwards took the book rather listlessly and let his eye run quickly down the closely printed lines. This doctor did have a lot of space. Why, in the *Who's Who in Business,* he himself, James E. Edwards, had never had more than half a dozen lines. And here, at the bottom of the page, were all the books and stuff that the man had written. Most of the titles were all gibberish to him. But his eye was caught by one of them. He read it once, took off his glasses, wiped them, put them on carefully, and read the lines again:

> Among his most widely known works is the book that has been of such great value to imperfectly instructed laymen; *Blood-Pressure: Its true significance and the misunderstandings commonly associated with it.*

Edwards looked up at his son, who was staring at him, quite at a loss to understand his father's sudden look of interest.

"Tommy," he said, as he laid his hand again on his son's knee, "I guess you're right. *This,*" he tapped the book with his forefinger, "this is the man I need."

PART SECOND

PART SECOND

Introductory Note

[This Part Second is to be written by me, James E. Edwards. Part First, which gives, I am sorry to say, a fairly accurate account of my "break-down," has been put together by my friend, the "Fear-Hunter." Of course, he has had to leave out a lot. It would take pages and pages to set down all the crazy, queer ideas I once had. The doctors tell me not to think about them now. For even now, if I do let my mind dwell on them, that old scared feeling comes over me, the feeling that something terrible is going to happen, something that I could sort of stave off by touching the wall eighteen times, or lying in bed in a certain position. I say "*could* stave off," but the fact was that *I had* to stave it off; I couldn't stop doing it to save my life. There was in me something stronger than myself that made me frightened and cringing until I had done what it seemed to want. So this Part First gives an idea of the condition I was in when I made up my mind to do what my son Tom wanted. From that moment until now I've had some mighty bad times, lots of discouragements, when I felt that

I was wasting my time and my money and making a fool of myself into the bargain; but looking back, I realize that at that moment I set my feet on the right road, and that, although often distrustful of the future, I have never strayed very far from it since. So that is why I shall call this the first chapter of my part of this book.—]

CHAPTER III

ON THE RIGHT ROAD AT LAST

For four nights I had been sleeping in Tom's rooms at the dormitory, spending my days running from one doctor's office to another, from the "eye man" to the dentist, from the neurologist to the heart specialist. I had never in all my life seen so many doctors, and it seemed to me as if I were seeing enough of them to last me for the rest of my days. Every part of my anatomy had been X-rayed. I had stood in a pitch-dark room and let a very kind young man look through my insides and draw the outline of my stomach in blue pencil on the skin of my chest. I had been terribly fussed at first. Indeed, looking back, I suppose I was fussy and cranky all the time. The first afternoon, when one of the Chief's associates went over me from top to toe, I kept waiting uneasily for that air-filled cuff. When he put it on I was surprised that he didn't attempt to hide the little clock-faced indicator with his hand. Of course I tried to read it. But the funny thing was that, after he'd taken the pressure, he left the cuff on, and sat down by me on the sofa and talked to me about my son Tom.

Tom seems to have a lot of doctor friends. I guess I forgot to fuss for a while. For in about ten minutes, while I was still talking about Tom, the doctor pumped air into the cuff again and squinted at the indicator. I made my old little bluff that, at home, had always been so promptly called.

"Pretty high, isn't it?" I said, with a sort of careless grin.

You might have knocked me down with a feather when the doctor man turned up the clock-faced indicator and *showed it to me.*

"Not so very," he said. "And while you've been sitting here talking with me, it has gone down twenty points."

And that was the very first time that I even knew that they measured blood-pressure in points. And the first time that I *had* got any definite information. It did me good. The pressure had gone *down.*

The Chief, the big man, you don't see much at first. Only you sort of feel him there behind everything, like some sort of a powerful, kindly force. While I was being examined that first day he came into the room for a few moments, but I was lying on my stomach having my back thumped, so I couldn't see much of him. Indeed, I didn't even know who he was.

By the end of the week my "diagnostic study," as they called it, was finished. With a lot of other patients—people from all over the country—a girl and her mother from Kansas City, a lawyer from

Florida, and three Canadians—I sat in the big shadowy waiting-room. And I was jumpy, I tell you. For now, now at last, I was going to find out something; I was going to know exactly what was "coming to me." I compared notes with the pale, skinny lawyer from Florida, and I guess all of us, waiting there, felt the same way. Like a man who's been tried for murder, and who is sitting in court waiting for the appearance of the jury, of those twelve men who hold in their hands his life—or his death. The eyes of us all were fixed on the sliding-doors at the far end of the room. They would open now and then, and a mighty pretty golden-haired secretary (there was another still prettier one, her sister perhaps, who took all the X-rays of my insides) would appear, and would call out a name. Then one of the waiting people, whom I'd come to know at least by sight during the preceding week, would get up, gather together coat and hat, give the rest of us a sort of sickly good-by smile, and then would—disappear. You never saw them again, at least never again in that waiting-room. They left the Chief's office by some other door.

Well, I kept getting jumpier and jumpier. I had been summoned for half-past three. But there must have been some delay somewhere. It was getting on to four o'clock. I heard one of the secretaries answering a long-distance call on an instrument near the door of the waiting-room. A call from *New Mexico*. She went out for a minute;

then she came back, and I heard her say, "He will leave this evening. Arrival on Tuesday at eleven. Have the other consultants at the house at eleven-fifteen." This stirred me all up. This Chief, this "big man," whom I had come so far to see, was going off to New Mexico, as unconcernedly apparently as if he were going across the street. That meant I shouldn't be able to see him for days. And my time—I thought then—was valuable. If he were going to treat me and cure me, why I wanted him to get right at it at once. This was no way to do business—to take on an important patient like me and then to dash off to the ends of the earth and leave him in the hands of some substitute. I had come here to get the VERY BEST there was. I wasn't going to be put off with second-class stuff. (Of course, I hadn't realized then that, if you get hold of the first assistant of some "big man," you will probably get as good if not better care than you would get from the boss himself. For the boss is at the top of the ladder; his time is crowded; he can't, simply can't, give the whole of himself to every patient. But the assistant is the coming "big man" of the day after to-morrow. And you can have him now—all of him.) Anyway, when I heard that telephone message, I was just about at the end of my patience. I got up. What was the good of waiting? I couldn't get what I'd come for. These doctors, in spite of all their apparent kindness and their laboratories and machines, were like all the

rest, thinking of themselves and their bank accounts before thinking of the patients who had come countless miles, and spent lots of hard-earned money to see them and be made well by them. I hate to think what an ass I might have made of myself. But I was, as I have said, on the right road, and someone—or something—outside of myself wasn't going to let me stray far from it. For just as I stood up, all shaky inside and stewing in my own silly anger, determined to leave then and there, the sliding-doors at the end of the waiting-room opened, and the secretary with the glinty yellow hair called out my name.

Now, I'm in a fair position to write out almost all that happened, almost all that was said during the next twenty minutes. For that same evening I jotted down in shorthand everything that I could remember. That shows what an impression the whole thing made on me. I never thought that I, James Edwards, with three secretaries and endless stenographers of my own, would resurrect the stenography of my course in night school, and use it to take down the words of—of any man. Write it all down myself—with my own hand—and fuss because I feared that I couldn't remember it all. And yet it wasn't so much what was said. It was the way he spoke—the way he made you feel, the way——

But I'll try to explain.

When I got inside those folding-doors I was mad

and tense all through. Without waiting to look round me, without even having courtesy enough to say "Good afternoon," I burst out:

"I seem to have come here under a misapprehension." (Lord, how hot and uncomfortable I feel all over, even now, when I remember the way, the childish way, the rude, rotten way I talked to—to him.) "I came here, Doctor, to be under your care. To be cured—by you. And now I understand that you are going off to New Mexico, and are leaving me to be cared for by your subordinates. I'm a plain man—a business man. And I—and I——"

My voice trailed off into silence. For as I had come forward farther into the big book-lined room, I had become conscious of a—of a something that —well, that just shut me up, and suddenly made me feel utterly ashamed of myself.

"Come and sit down here, Mr. Edwards," a voice said. It came from the shadowy part of the room, just beyond one of the big windows, where there stood a wide, flat desk. And behind the desk, leaning on it with his left arm and shading his eyes with his right hand, was a man—the "big man," the "Chief," as Tom called him—the man whom I had come so far to see. But it was his voice that cooled me off like cool, refreshing water on an aching, throbbing head. Before I knew it I was sitting in a deep, comfortable chair just beside the desk, and he was looking at me, still shading his eyes with his right hand, while his left arranged

a sheaf of papers or reports on the desk beside him.

For the life of me, however, I can't remember what he said next. I was still too fussed up, too confused, I suppose, to register much. But one thing I do remember. And I shall never forget it either. It was, as I've said, the way he made me feel. The look in his eyes *comforted* you—that's the only way I can describe it—made you feel that he *wanted* to help you. And his voice had a sort of clean-cut authority about it—a sort of assurance —that made you believe that he had the *power*— that he *could* help. And then, when he smiled, his whole face lighted up, and you knew that he not only *wanted* to help and *could* help, but that it was a *joy,* a *pleasure* to him to do that very helping— *for you.* A few wandering rays of afternoon sunlight slipped through the window curtains behind him and made a sort of background for his clean-cut, clean-shaven face, and his soft white hair. A tall, straight-standing man he was too. And, though I'm no judge and never did care much whether a man was homely as a hedge fence or not, the best-looking man I've ever seen.

And that's that.

He never answered my first rude outburst. He just let me calm down, while he talked in a general way. Then he took up the sheaf of papers before him.

"These," he said, "are the reports of my col-

leagues on your case." My heart gave a jump. Here, in this bundle of typewritten sheets, was my "verdict."

"Well?" I sort of gasped, wetting my dry lips with my tongue.

"It isn't *well* at all, I'm afraid," he answered. Then, holding up his hand as I slumped back into my seat and put my hand to my heart, he added: "But there is no reason why it should not *be*—well, once again. It all lies with you yourself."

"What!" said I, "with myself?" This was to me an entirely new idea. What had *I* got to do with it? "Why, then I needn't have come here at all."

He gave me one of those smiles of his.

"But now that you *are* here," he replied, making me feel somehow like a spoiled child that has to be humored a little, but in the kindest possible way, "now that you are here, you have taken the first step toward recovery. And you must take the next steps too."

"All right," said I. "What are they?"

"I will give you the results of our examination. Your teeth need attention. At least three are suspect, probably abscessed—all of them. Your digestive processes are impaired. I won't go into the details. But you'll have to go on a carefully balanced diet. A slight trace of albumin in the urine. Lungs and heart show no organic trouble. Your blood-pressure ought to come down about twenty

points; and your weight ought to go up about twenty pounds. I suggest that you take a comfortable room in one of the Nursing Homes. There is a pleasant one, not far from the University, where, as I understand it, your son is studying. We will make all the arrangements. You can move in to-night. You will be on what we call 'isolation.' That means, no visits, except one half-hour a week with your son. No letters; no telegrams. All the wires that connect you with the outside world must be cut. No, don't interrupt. Every business man I've ever had as a patient thinks that he will go into bankruptcy or that his firm will go to pieces, if he takes his hand off it for a week. But it won't. If you have built up a successful organization, it will go on functioning for a while without you. And even if it does go wrong in some respects, why that will only show you where the weak spots have been, so that, when you get back to the office, you can alter and strengthen them. The isolation in your case is absolutely necessary."

"But, Doctor," I interposed, "I'd go crazy, lying there for day after day, in bed, doing nothing but twiddle my thumbs. I've been an active man, I've kept going——"

He gave me another smile. And I stopped protesting.

"You'll be isolated, but you won't be inactive. There'll be plenty for you to do, plenty to occupy your mind. Trust us for that." He seemed to

gather up all his authority, all his experience in one look at me, from under the palm of his hand. "Now, listen. You have come a long way to us. That means two things: first, that you needed us, and, secondly, that you had confidence in us." (He was one of the most modest men I've ever met; he never said "I"; it was always "we," as if his assistants were quite as important as himself.) "Give us that confidence absolutely. Don't ask any questions. When you hang up your hat in the front hall of the Nursing Home, hang up with it your own will, your own desires, your own judgment. Stop being the 'boss.' We'll attend to all the bossing that has to be done. You do what you're told. And —I think I can assure you—you will get well. More important than well-being, however, is something else. You want to be contented and happy. And I take it, of late, happiness and contentment have somehow disappeared together with health. I haven't touched on what we call the psychogenic elements in your case—the mental symptoms—those upsetting factors that come from poor habits of thought, from ill-disciplined emotions. You are——"

But here I had to interrupt. One of my worst old bugbears was growling in one corner of my mind.

"You don't think I'm—I'm going crazy?" I stammered.

He answered me in clipped, strong sentences,

each of which seemed to have all his authority behind it:

"Your mind is unimpaired. There are no symptoms of any ominous mental disease. Put the possibility of what you call insanity out of your thoughts now, and for the future."

This did me good. This told me something. When I got upset and worried, I could repeat this to myself. And I felt that when he said a thing like that he knew what he was talking about; he *knew*. You couldn't get away from that. But I wasn't quite satisfied yet.

"But how about this isolation business?" I demanded. I was feeling easier in my mind than I had felt for months. "I can't stay away from my work very long. How long is this cure of yours to be?"

"Just about as long as a string," he said. "More I can't tell you. And I wouldn't if I could. Remember, no questions. You stay in the Nursing Home until we tell you that you can leave. However, I can say this: that the length of your particular string will depend largely on yourself."

"But, Doctor" (all my remarks, during that interview, seem to have begun with a "but"), "in the Nursing Home—do you come there every day, or do I come here? And if you're going to New Mexico——"

He gave me a look that was like the rap of a teacher's ruler on the knuckles of an inquisitive

schoolboy. Underneath that kindly smile of his was a hard, granite-like quality, a dominant determination, that set his lips, smiling a moment before, in a thin red line.

"I shall see you occasionally, of course. But you will be under the direct care of Dr. Oldham King, whom you have already met." (That was all right. I had taken a fancy to that doctor; he was the one who had taken my blood-pressure.) "And I shall also want our psychiatrist to see you every day or two. Our 'mental adjuster,' as we call him."

"For the Lord's sake, Doctor," I protested. "Not one of those nut doctors, who ask you about your dreams, and say words to you that you have to find an answer to while they hold the stop watch on you. I had one of them in the hospital at home once. But only once. I told him I never had had a dream in my life. And that stumped him. The only thing that seemed to please him was when I told him that I'd always been afraid of snakes.—Most people are.—Don't send me a man like that."

"But you have seen our psychiatrist already," the Chief retorted. "I have his report here. I have not touched on it, because——"

I began to blush; a whole wave of ticklish redness seemed to spread over my body.

"Oh, that—that man, is it?" I stammered. "The queerest kind of a doctor I ever met. I couldn't understand why you sent me to him anyway. But I don't want to see *him* again—ever. Why, I'd

be ashamed to.—That man ought to have been a lawyer. In an hour he turned my mind inside out. When I got to his office I thought I was going to another dentist or an 'eye man,' and I kept looking around the room for instruments, or a chair or something. But it was just like a comfortable library, like my 'den' at home. Not a sign of an instrument. And I walked right into it. Wasn't kept sitting in a waiting-room, getting depressed and worried over a lot of old copies of the *Literary Digest*."

"He seems to have interested you," the Chief interposed. I am surprised now, looking back, at my own flow of speech.

"He did worse than that," I hurried on. For I wanted to make the Chief understand why I couldn't see that man again. "Why he got me telling him things—things that I'd forgotten for years —things about myself when I was a boy—about the time before I was married—even about my wife —and—I don't know how he did it. But it was as if he pulled out a plug, and all the stuff that had settled at the bottom of my mind flowed out. And the worst of it was that I didn't realize, at the time, what sort of things I was telling. It wasn't till I got out on the street that my ears and my face began to burn." A terrible thought suddenly occurred to me. I bent forward in my chair and pointed to the papers in front of the Chief. "Gosh Almighty, Doctor," I gasped, "that man hasn't written down in his report the things I told him.

Why, I said those things in the strictest confidence. If anyone should ever get a sight of that report—my wife, for instance—why——"

"Don't be worried, Mr. Edwards." His voice quieted me again. "Some day, when you are well, I hope that I may be able to show you this report. There is nothing in it that you might be ashamed of. On the contrary. 'That man,' as you call him, is very deeply interested in your case. So take it easy."

He got up; and I felt that our interview was at an end. But one final "question" kept knocking in my brain, the question that had been fussing me for so many months, and that I'd never got an answer to, at least never an answer that I could believe. And one other thing, as I think back over that interview, was curious—especially curious in a man like me. I hadn't said in so many words that I'd go into a Nursing Home, had given no promise that I would do as the Chief said—leave my own will at the door with my hat, ask no questions and do as I was told. And yet, as I stood in the doorway, the small door giving on to the front hall from which the patients who have been "seen" disappear, I had no more intention of *not* doing as he said than I had of taking off all my clothes and dancing the Charleston, right there in his study. I hadn't been forced to decide anything; it had all been decided for me. I didn't even have to say "Yes." I often wonder what would have happened

if I had said "No." I imagine that there aren't many patients, men or women, who say "No" to the Chief. Anyhow, I didn't. Besides, my mind was obsessed with that one "question."

I stood in the doorway, fussing with my hat. I saw the Chief start to press the buzzer on his desk. In a moment I knew that the sliding-doors at the other end of the room would open; the girl with the glinty hair would appear, and, at her heels, the next patient, probably that lawyer from Florida. Or the girl and her mother from Kansas City. So I had to make haste.

"Then, Doctor—then you—you," I stuttered like a fool. The Chief lifted his finger from where it hovered over the buzzer. Somehow he seemed to realize that I had something important to say. But he himself said nothing, just waited for me to get a grip on myself. For a moment I thought I wouldn't ask that one "question," after all. Even to me, to whom it was so important, it seemed sort of foolish. But I stuck to it. I'm glad I did.

"Then you don't think," I said all in a rush, "that I'm going to die."

He gave me just one look—the kindest, most understanding look that I've ever seen on a man's face. Then he seemed to gather up all his authority and power and experience, and just shoot it at me.

"Mr. Edwards," he said, speaking slowly, and letting every word drop into my mind like a stone dropping into a pond, "you're on the wrong track.

You are in no danger from your *body*. Unless you send for him yourself, Death isn't coming to you for a very, very long time yet. Why, man, you *couldn't* die if you wanted to."

I got out into the hall somehow. And there I ran into my son Tom, who had arranged to meet me here after my interview. He said afterward that he was much worried about me. I seemed so quiet, so sort of "turned in on myself," as if something strange had happened to me.

Well, something had, all right.

Besides that, my "question" had been answered. If I could only make myself believe in the answer. In the answerer himself, I believed already.

And so, that same evening, after having supper with Tom at a hotel in the town, I walked with him up the tree-shaded streets to a very comfortable-looking house, set back from the street in a little green square of its own. In the hall we were met by a large, very sedate, cowlike woman.

"Mr. Edwards," she began at once, "you are to have one of the rooms that face on the quiet side street, on our second floor. Your bags are up there now. Your son had them sent down from the University this evening. And your nurse—Miss Dale — will come on duty to-morrow at eight o'clock."

Then, as she noticed what I was doing, she interposed:

"You may as well take your hat with you up to

your room. You probably won't need it for quite a while."

"No," said I, and I suppose she thought that I was what they call a "mental case;" "if you don't mind, I'm going to hang my hat right here. There are some other things that have got to be hung up with it."

And I plugged my old felt hat on one of the posts of the rack, as if I meant it to stay there. And that was just what I did mean.

What a rotten night I had, that first night in the Nursing Home! It took me—I might as well confess it here—nearly two hours to get to bed in that strange, quiet room. But when I did, finally, get to bed, I went to sleep, and, what is much more important, I stayed asleep all night.

Intermediate Note

In between the different parts or divisions of this book, you will find little notes or bits of explanations that sort of hitch up one chapter or part to another. In the three preceding chapters, you have got some sort of an idea of what my troubles were. And the rest of the book is going to be taken up with a description of how I got rid of them. But there will be more than that, I hope, in it. For I have persuaded my friend the Fear-Hunter, or the Mind-Doctor—I have fifteen names for him and no one of them expresses him quite—to go over my own rough stenographic notes of his talks with me,

to make some additions, and to stick in some high-brow references. It was hard to persuade him to do it. You see, he ought to write a book, a book to help people like me. But he won't. He hasn't got time, he says. But the real reason for his refusal is because he hates to talk about himself. And yet so many of the helpful things that he knows come just from his own experience. Besides that, if he is shy about his own methods, he's a thousand times shyer about a thing that, in the second part of this book, is going to be spoken about, or written about quite a lot. I mean, the thing men call "religion." Yet I don't mean that at all. Because the thing that most men call "religion" was never any use to me, and I guess it wouldn't help other fear-patients any more than it once helped me. But what I do mean, or try to mean, is the thing that he—this friend of mine—this Soul-Healer—this doctor with a streak of the priest in him—that *he* means by "religion."

Well, the only way I got round him was by telling him that he was hiding his talent under a tin can—me and his other patients being the tin can—and that to help write this book was a duty he owed, not to us or even to himself, but to the people who couldn't get within the sound of his voice and yet who needed him, perhaps to Someone else too. Besides, I explained that the book would never be published—who would want to publish a book like that anyway, these days?—and that the putting it

together would be a help to me—would impress on my mind the things that he and I and the others had talked over together.

I had to promise him that no names should appear—that I would not even give him an imaginary name, because, if I did, he said, some modern psychoanalyst might come along, and, without my knowing it, might get at his real name by finding out my mental associations with the fictitious names I had used. And no places must be mentioned either. Of course I promised willingly enough. For I'm writing my part of this book for myself, because I want to have it to refer to if things ever get all messed up in my mind again. I'm going to have about twenty copies printed and the type distributed; and I'm going to keep all the copies myself, until I run across some man or woman that I know who needs one. Even then, I'll just lend them a copy.*

But before I start out with those chapters that cover the various stages in my getting well, I want to put in here the report that was made on my case by the doctor who afterward became my friend. I can't put it all in. Some things are too intimate; the knowledge that they were typed somewhere would make me squirm, and a lot of other stuff is written in medical slang that I don't understand. Probably it is just as well I don't.

* It was through Mr. Edwards' neglect to adhere to his rule, his forgetfulness in demanding back a copy he had lent, that the book came into the hands of its present editor and publisher.

However, with these few exceptions, I give the report just as it was when it lay on the Chief's desk during my interview in his office. Usually, patients never see reports like this. And they are only made, I imagine, in intricate, sort of borderline cases like mine. Anyhow, when I was nearly well, I remembered what the Chief had said about this report; I asked to see it, and my Fear-Hunter and I went over it together. (I never told him that I copied it on the sly.) He said it would give me a good idea of how I looked to a psychiatrist, a mind-doctor, when I first came here. And it will keep me reminded, in the future, of the same thing. Besides, if anyone ever reads this, it will show him the worst of me.—It's wiser to begin with the very worst and then lead up to—well, perhaps not to the *very best*—but to the better anyway.

CHAPTER IV

PSYCHIATRIC REPORT AND PERSONALITY ANALYSIS OF J. E. EDWARDS

MR. JAMES EDGAR EDWARDS

Examined June 27, 1926. *Aged fifty-two.*

The patient is a powerfully built, compact man of medium height and weight. His muscles, especially those of the torso, were probably well developed in youth, but are now flabby from lack of exercise. He is slightly pompous; makes one feel that he knows himself to be an important personage in his community and is determined that here, in a strange environment, he shall also be considered and treated as such. The type of man who thinks that he is saying something flattering when he announces: "Splendid doctors in my home town, of course, splendid. But I had heard about your work here" (this is almost always a lie; generally his "home physician" has forced him to come to us, much against his will) "and so I" (great emphasis always on the "I") "thought I'd just stop over on my way to New York and get you to look me over. I'm not a rich man" (even the multimillionaires

always say that; a sort of defense-reaction to the memory of stories of exorbitant medical fees) "but I've done fairly well. I can afford the best.—And that's what I want—the best." (Just as if we had five or six methods of examination or treatment, varying in price, like ready-made clothes.)

The patient is clean-shaven. There is determination, stubbornness in the heavy jaw, in the strongly molded nose. The outlines of the bony skull are good; rather a fine, roomy upper-head. The lines from nose to the corners of the mouth are very noticeable; this man has learned success in a hard school. He does not, I think, spare others; nor does he spare himself. But his eyes betray him. They suggest loneliness—and fear. Which came first, one cannot say yet.

He is married and has two children. But back of this bald statement lies a very complex entanglement of emotional difficulties. One feels that his wife is neither mentally nor physically a companion or a help. He seems to be proud of his son and daughter. But he has no intimate contacts with them at present. No very intimate friends. In fact, no adequate emotional outlets at all, in the domestic and social sphere. Faithful to his wife, probably; if so, largely because he has been too busy for anything else. Powerful as he is in his business life, a hard task-master, an efficient worker himself, he seems to have been incapable or unwilling to mold his home environment to his own

desires; perhaps, during the period when this molding was possible, he was too busy, too preoccupied with other matters. And when it was too late to mold he surrendered to existing conditions.

He remembers no falls or accidents during childhood or later. Shocks, of a mental nature, are denied. But one is perfectly sure that something has happened to upset his emotional equilibrium. He admits certain periods of mental stress, especially between his twenty-eighth and thirty-fifth year, when his business activities involved a great deal of effort and anxiety. Outside of business nothing except a sex escapade, accompanied by some worry, which he mentioned with great reluctance. (See paragraph on Sex below.) And yet one feels absolutely certain that patient is laboring, at the present moment, under a constant stress and tension, and that this has been going on for some time.

Habits. He smokes too much. While sitting with me, his right hand kept straying unconsciously toward his left vest pocket from which the tops of four very black cigars protruded. He admits some six such cigars a day. But he smokes more than this. I asked him to light a cigar. He has the poisonous habit of chewing the end of his cigar; that is, he smokes and chews, without realizing it, at the same time. He has never used much alcohol. But he admits that, of late, he has occasionally taken a "little rye" just before lunch, and sometimes before going to bed. There can be only one reason for

this; he needs the alcohol to brace himself to meet some situation that frequently recurs. His boyhood (see Life History below), on a farm near a small country town, naturally involved immature and premature sex experiences. These have all been more or less repressed; he felt intense shame and self-reproach in recalling them; rather unusual in a man of his type. In the extreme religious atmosphere of his family all sex matters were absolutely taboo. Hence he could get help from no one. His school in such things was "back of the barn" and the "soda-water fountain" at the village drug store. Period of auto-erotism, followed by a revival meeting, where he became "convicted of sin," believed that he was saved, and then, of course, fell back into his former habits. Long mental struggle and stress; constant promises to himself to "be good," followed by as frequent lapses. Finally, a period of emotional depression; believed that he was "lost eternally," and that everyone around him knew "what the trouble was," because he had pimples on his neck and "blue lines under his eyes." Hence an increasing sense of inferiority that pursued him for years. This conflict had, therefore, most serious results. He poured out the story of it—a most pitiful thing—a helpless, untaught boy unnecessarily tormented. An early marriage healed the purely physical wounds of the conflict. But the sense of inferiority persisted. In his business life he overcompensated; became intolerant, dominating, dis-

agreeable. But gradually, as he saw himself successful, this sense of success weakened the former inferiority feelings, and the hours in his office built up in him a fairly well-founded sense of equality, or rather of superiority. Yet this building has been weakened of late; that I know. Something has undone the work of years. For to-day the patient's self-confidence is an empty shell. His marital relations were very satisfactory during the first five years of marriage. But, after the birth of her second child, the wife—[I'm going to cut this piece out. I don't want my wife blamed for anything. J. E. E.] Except for the one extra-marital episode just mentioned, patient has lived what is called a "clean life." But, as also above noted, his physical outlets, since the birth of the second child, have been blocked.

The patient's heredity and life-history are of importance. On his father's side he comes of middle-class English stock that was settled in Connecticut as far back as patient has any record or remembrance. One son moved "westward" (as it was called then) in 1800, "took up land," and his descendants were all born in the country. But, as is usually the case, the majority of each generation drifted away from the farm to the city, leaving the "old place" to the eldest or to some land-loving son. Patient's paternal grandfather was a small farmer, who invested shrewdly in some real estate in the town that grew up near by. His three sons quar-

reled over the inheritance; the eldest son, the father's favorite, got the greater part by will, took his money, and went cityward. Patient knows surprisingly little about his relatives two generations back. For this quarrel split up the family. The second son, patient's father, was left the farm, but no ready money with which to keep it going or to improve it. Hence early years of struggle, bitterness, and a general sense of "not having been rightly done by," of "this world being only a place of sin and disappointment, after all," and of "heaven being our hope and home." This second son, patient's father, was a close-fisted, suspicious, repressed man, "six feet three" in height and weighing over two hundred and fifty pounds. As a father very severe, often unjust, a great believer in "bodily discipline." His one interest outside the farm was his religion. A Methodist of the strictest type, abhorring cards, dancing, music (he left his local church, and for thirty years drove eight miles every Lord's Day to the nearest other one, because his pastor had installed a harmonium and made "idolatrous sounds in the Lord's presence"), seeing sin and damnation in everything, but especially in all the expressions of the sexual life. The patient feared him always. In his presence, even when patient was a man grown, he would shrivel up and stand abashed. And, very naturally, he always thought of God in terms of his father. The old man lived to be eighty-nine; was scarcely ever ill. One afternoon, while

sitting on his "front stoop," he stood up suddenly and said, in a tone of joyful surprise, "Why, Mary," and dropped dead. Mary was the name of his first wife, patient's mother. She must have been a most unusual personality. Of her patient can talk easily and well. All he knows of her people, however, is that she came of Irish forebears. Her father had been an emigrant from South Ireland who had married an Irish servant-girl in New York. Both were, I suppose, Roman Catholics. But both died early, leaving their only child, a girl of five, to be sent off to a distant cousin in the Middle West who was married to the owner of a small general store. These foster parents were money-worshiping, materialistic people, and the husband may even have had some Jewish blood in his veins. At any rate, religion was a matter of no importance in this family. The little girl grew up efficient, generally beloved, but emotionally starved. When she was eighteen, John Edwards, the farmer, rather an important person in the little community, who bought his supplies at the general store, after watching her behind the counter for many years, asked her to marry him. He was fifteen years her elder; and even then a big, domineering, hard man. But the girl's foster parents were flattered. And they did not allow her time to think or to refuse. In her husband's home she found, if not "religion," at least "a religion," and, as her Irish heart was probably hungry for religious emotion and experience,

she threw herself into her Methodism with fervor. She became prominent at revivals and experience meetings. And, as the patient says, "she seemed to live in a sort of a world of her own. When I was with her, as a little boy, I remember that I always felt warm, and protected, and somehow—somehow —safe." One can easily imagine that the Irish temperament, steeped in Roman Catholicism for generations, must have tempered the stern Puritanism, and transformed it—the only religion that the woman ever knew. She may have been in the right church, but she was in the wrong pew.

Unluckily, when patient was fourteen—just when he was at the beginning of the sex conflict mentioned above—his mother died. And with her went his feelings of protection and of safety. As already mentioned, he reached out in his conflict to his father's religion and did his best to assimilate it. But without much success. He says:

> One of the things that queered the Methodist Church for me was something the minister told me on the day of mother's funeral. He said that, if I were really religious and was a "good boy," I'd feel myself nearer to my dead mother. Well, I tried. Good Lord, how I did try! For that was what I wanted—to keep hold of her somehow—not to miss her so all the time. But either that minister lied, or else I didn't work the religion in the right way.

For the more I prayed, the more I got converted and tried to feel myself a sinner, the farther off mother seemed. The only times I'd feel better about her—not miss her so much—was when I'd be off alone by myself in the woods, early on some spring morning. And even that didn't last long. I soon got a stepmother, you see. A good woman enough, I guess; she made father comfortable, but she made me uncomfortable all the time. The minute she came round where I was I knew she'd begin finding fault with something I did or was—my shoes, or the way I held myself, or my finger-nails, or the way I talked—through my nose, she said. Luckily she didn't bear father any children. I'd have strangled the first baby, I guess, if I'd seen it lying in the old cradle that mother used to rock with her foot. If it hadn't been for my stepmother, though, I'd never have got dissatisfied enough to pull up my stakes and leave the farm. Might have been farming yet.

One can imagine the abrupt change in the patient's adolescent life, brought about by his mother's death and his father's remarriage. His sex conflicts, his longing for his mother, his fear of his father, and, later, his dislike of his stepmother—all these forces were impinging on his boyish mind in a home atmosphere of stern repression,

endless routine and discipline, and of a religion that, for the boy, had in it less love than fear.

No very marked psychopathic traits in his early life. Except night terrors, associated with dreams of burglars or of "something coming up the stair." The usual illnesses of childhood only. School he hated. It was very hard for him to apply himself; he must have matured late mentally. For in the schoolroom his mind was always wandering. He could not "keep it on his lessons." Physically he was strong; the farmwork, done before and after school hours, developed his muscles and kept him fit. He did best in arithmetic; his bugbear was "English." But he finished the eighth grade at the primary school and then entered the high school in the town near by. In the summers he worked on the farm and got nothing for it, while other boys took "summer jobs" and made a little money.

He did not graduate. For he had a position offered him in a new plant of a bicycle manufacturing company, just built on the outskirts of the town. There was a row at home; but for once he was as stubborn as his father, and he left the farm to live by himself in a small room in a boarding-house. After two years, came the great emotional upheaval of his life. He fell in love with a girl whom he had known at high school. She told him (and this always flattered his masculine pride) that his "whirlwind courting, his caveman determination, just carried her off her feet." At any rate, when

he was little over twenty he found himself with a wife to support. And after some three years (thanks to his wife's prudent determination that they "weren't well-off enough to have children right away") with a baby also. Those were hard, embittering years. It was then that he must have begun to draw and gradually to deepen those lines that are now cut so clearly from his nose to the corners of his mouth.

The bicycle plant went out of business suddenly. The patient cannot, even now, speak of this period without a sharp intake of his breath. He, with wife and two babies to care for, was "out of a job." In a despairing mood he went to see the man who had been the superintendent of the dismantled factory; and he sent him, on an off chance, to the personnel official of the reorganized company, which was about to manufacture something else that the public needed more than bicycles. Patient had to go to Chicago to find this man. The journey cost him almost his last dollar. But he found the man and a "job" also.

Now, some twenty-five years after that journey, he is president or senior partner of that same company. His practical experience in the bicycle plant stood him in good stead; he soon made himself very valuable. The rest, as he says, "was easy."

"And to-day," he added, blowing out his chest, "I am putting on the market an article that is 'nationally advertised,' sir. Not a decent man in this coun-

try but uses our product every morning while completing his toilette. And, in a few years, sir, we shall be known in Europe. Perhaps even farther still."

[What a fool I must have seemed, when I said all that. And I've no doubt that I did say it. The Doctor, in making up his report—this report that I am putting in here—was merciful enough not to give all our conversation, which went something like this: "Why of course," he said, after I'd boasted and puffed about myself, "I ought to have recognized you at once. Only that picture of you—on your—your product—isn't exactly a flattering likeness. You wore glasses when it was taken, if I remember rightly." When the doctor said that I was pleased as Punch. I had always rather fancied that picture of me (taken by a little photographer in South Bend, Ill.), and I had felt sort of disappointed, I guess, because no one in this Eastern high-brow town had recognized me before. I made some fool answer to what the Doctor said—something about "my face on the container being an assurance of an A #1 product." I remember his answer well enough. I'm glad he didn't put it into his report. "Oh, yes," he said, in that soft, rather sleepy voice of his, "I often notice you when I am. doing what you call 'completing my toilette.' Reminds me always of Pope's famous

lines about vice. 'But seen too oft'—you know how it goes. Interesting to have oneself 'nationally advertised' like that. Like the picture of Don Pedro on the old five-cent cigars. Or the Smith Brothers Cough Drops—the ones with the long beards." Well, I tell you, I felt like a gas balloon that's had a pin stuck into it. I didn't get the stuff about Pope; I looked that up afterwards. One of the Doctor's favorite tricks that was too—quoting or referring to something in such an interesting way that you simply *had* to find out what he was talking about. But I must go back to the words of the report.]

Outside of his business, patient has practically no interests or hobbies of any kind. He plays no outdoor games. Golf to him is something for "lazy millionaires" or "retired business men." "And, thank God, I'm not retired yet; not by a long shot." He belongs to a lodge, but never goes there now. Has been president of the local Rotary Club, vice-president of the Chamber of Commerce; is on the board of directors of two banks and of one hospital. He is "very charitable"; gives a "fat yearly check" to the Community Chest of his "home town," but hasn't, of course, time to do or to give anything of himself.

During our interview he was, except occasionally, on the defensive. But he *can* be got at, so that

the case presents no insuperable difficulties. No definite psychosis at present. But the entire emotional equilibrium is upset; and the upsetting factor is, I think, fear. If he decides to stay here under our care, he can be set right and made happy, I feel sure. Only the process of re-education and of readaptation will be long and in places probably very difficult. At present I scarcely think that a routine psychoanalysis of the usual type would help him much.

For some reason or other I have taken an unusual interest in this case. Patient is so typical of so many successful men of business in our country, and yet he has so many unusual personal characteristics —in a word, he seems so much *worth* helping, while, at the same time, so difficult to help, that the problem cannot but appeal to us here However, I very much doubt whether I am the person to attempt it. In getting at the material given in this report, I had to be somewhat high-handed at times, had to put leading questions and probe some old, still sensitive wounds. This he resented. And he will doubtless feel antagonistic always in my presence. Let one of the other men take on the case.

CHAPTER V

THE FEAR-HUNTER

Every year of my life henceforth, when Thanksgiving Day comes round, and I try, as I intend to do now, to think of my blessings and give thanks, I'm going to get down on my knees and thank God that, as I lay in the Nursing Home last June, no "one of the other men" *was* in town. So no attention was paid to the last recommendation in the psychiatric report. And I say now, once again, thank God. It seemed that we were sort of fated to come together, my Fear-Hunter and I. For he usually took his holidays in June. It was only because of his mother's illness that he was in town. Just a chance. Only he never looked at it in that way. He always said, pointing his finger at me, as I lay in bed, patiently making baskets, "Chance? Not much. It was the Hound of Heaven."

As I've said before, he kept referring to mysterious things and getting you curious, so that you'd ask him what he meant. And then he'd say, "Look it up," and I'd set my nurse almost crazy running down to the Public Library or the big bookstores.

Now let me go back to the beginning of things, or to what was to prove the real beginning for me.

I had been in that confounded Nursing Home for three days. And I was sick to death of it already. Mad, too, clear through. In the first place, except for young Oldham King, the doctor who was our interne, so to speak, and who came in and grinned cheerfully at me once a day for five minutes, I had not seen hide or hair of any other doctor. Nothing had been done about having my abscessed teeth out; I had had no glimpse of the "consulting psychiatrist," though I wasn't so much disappointed about that, but on the contrary, rather relieved; and, as for the Chief, why I supposed that he was in New Mexico still. I was marooned on a desert island with a young, kind-hearted girl, graduated only two years ago, whose chief idea of nursing seemed to be to put one hand in the nape of my neck and hold me up whenever she gave me anything to drink with the other. I didn't want to be held up; her hand was hot and moist and it tickled me, so that I couldn't swallow straight and nearly choked to death several times. She wanted, every morning when she "came on duty," to bathe me—ALL OVER. And me a perfectly healthy, strong man, with my bathroom door not ten feet from my bed. The first day she suggested bathing me, just to show her how unnecessary this was, I jumped up myself and dashed into the bathroom. I suppose this scared her. You see, I was to her "a mental case," and she didn't know yet just how "mental." Anyway, I heard her footsteps hurry across the bedroom

floor as I closed the bathroom door. "Caught you, this time, Little One," I thought, and felt for the key. My Lord, there was none! And no bolt either. In a nursing home it seems they don't have bolts or locks on bathroom doors. Well, she opened the door just as if I hadn't been there, went to the bathtub and, turning on the water, took down a big thermometer from the wall.

"Your bath is not to be over 72° Fahrenheit," she said. "That is, if you care to take one. For you'll get your hydrotherapy this afternoon."

And would you believe it, she drew the water, went out, and left me to take my bath, leaving the bathroom door half open, so that she could keep an eye on me.

Well, I didn't bathe, that morning. Of course she thought I was a "distinctly mental case."

All day long she just hovered around me. Wanted to read to me—from the newspapers; wanted me to "take just a little nap, just forty nice winks," after luncheon. She'd bring in my tray, all fixed up with a few smelly flowers, and she darned near wanted to feed me.

All I did was to stay in bed for three days, and to sleep and eat. I will say they fed me up like a fatted calf—"nourishment every three hours." Nourishment! The mere sound of the word takes my appetite away even now. But the baths—the hydrotherapy—that was really some fun; seemed of some use. It was down there, in the basement, that I

ran across the Florida lawyer. But would you believe it, I wasn't allowed to talk to him. We were "on isolation." I did talk—a few words—but he just looked at me and said nothing. Mighty sick he looked, too. And he and Dr. King and my nurse were the only people I'd seen for three long days.

And the nights! Just when I needed a nurse, or at any rate, someone to keep me company a little, my bright ministering angel would fold her wings and depart, about eight o'clock. She'd pretend it was eleven and that I was all fixed for the night. But after she went I'd be out of bed in a second. And then all the old fears would start to be-devil me. I'd have the pressure under my heart, and the burning pain, and my head would throb. I'd try to read a novel. But whenever I got to a page numbered 3 or 13, or any number with a lot of 3's, I'd get afraid to turn over that page for fear something would happen. Or I'd skip all the pages that had 3's at the top, or read over and over some lucky page that had an 18 or a 27. You can imagine how much good I got out of the book. If I'd only had someone there—someone just to sit and watch me —I'd have been ashamed to do all the fool things I had been accustomed to do for the last ten months, before getting into bed each night.

So here I was, all alone, in a perfectly strange place, with no chance of getting down to the office in the morning, and with nothing to think of except

myself and what a fool I'd been to come all this way and to spend all this money, just to lie in bed, and eat and fuss and get scared. For, in spite of all the Chief had said to me, I *was* scared about myself yet. I tell you, you don't get over being scared in three days when you've been scared for ten months. So I'd lie awake and toss, then drop off at about eleven, and—wake up at four.

Gentlemen—"you-all" (as these half-Southerners here say), "you-all" who wake just when day is breaking, knowing that you aren't going to get to sleep again, and who lie twitching in bed, with your eyes clamped tight shut in the hope—the very faint hope of catching perhaps another fifteen minutes of forgetfulness—you who, at this accursed hour, are visited by all the blue devils from the bluest of hells—the memories of all your past mistakes from the time when you stole that dime from Aunt Susie in order to see the circus and were caught at it, to the last time, a month ago, when you tried to put over a mighty sharp piece of business and got stung by a fellow sharper than you were, from that evening when you went to your first dance at "The Corners," determined that Sol Heinshaus wasn't going to cut you out with Sally this time, and she snickered and turned away from you because, in your hurry, you'd come without a necktie, down to your wife's whispered, "I told you so," the last evening you and she were invited out to dinner and everyone, except yourself, was wearing Tuxedos

and stiff white shirts, while you, in that wrinkled old blue business suit, hadn't even changed your collar—gentlemen, fellow sufferers all—I, who have been through it also, salute you.

But worse than the things you've *done* is the memory, at that time in the morning, of the things you *ought* to have done, and didn't. Of opportunities missed, of times when you stood at an important crossroads in your life, and, without a moment's hesitation, took the path on your left, when any idiot except yourself would have known that the right-hand one was the road for you. If you had only been less sure of yourself—if someone had only come along and pointed out that right-hand road —what a different thing your whole life might have been! If—if—if— The master-word of torment at four o'clock in the morning.

Worst of all, for me, was when I'd get thinking of —of my mother. Of the times when I might have helped her a little or shown my affection. I used to sort of squirm and shrink away when she tried to kiss me, ashamed of being kissed, like a "kid." But, Lord, Lord, how often I've lain awake in the early hours, and shriveled up with shame for having ever been ashamed of being kissed—by her. And of that day, when I was fussing in my little carpenter-shop in the old barn, and my sister ran out and told me mother was very sick and to come quick, she wanted to see me. But I—I was in the middle of something that seemed important—tinkering with my tools—

and I—I didn't come. Not right away. And when I did get to the house—I was too late. I was her only son, her favorite child, and I wasn't there when she wanted me—for the last time.

Somehow, since my interview with the Soul-Doctor—the interview that had made me feel so ashamed and hope I'd never see "that man" again —I've thought about mother a great deal. Especially in those early morning hours at the Nursing Home.

So, of course, my first three nights there had been rotten ones. I'd been told to ring the bell at the head of my bed if I wanted anything during the night. But I never rang it. I was more afraid of the strange person its ringing might bring than of all my blue devils. I knew *them,* sort of. But I just couldn't face having to explain what I wanted to some total stranger, either a young ray of efficient sunshine, like my day-nurse, or a full, steady glow of efficient moonlight, like the head of the home in her office off the front hall downstairs. And what *did* I want anyway? If I had rung the bell, if someone had come, what could I have said?

Three nights, then, like that. And three days—marooned, isolated, nourished up, nursed up, read up, hydrotherapied up—and fed up with the whole business. Still, perhaps, I'd have stuck it out for a whole week (I paid by the week, you see) if it hadn't been for the hole-borings and the baskets.

They called it "occupational therapy." In the

basement of the home was a little carpenter-shop. Now I love the very smell of glue and freshly sawed wood, and I rejoiced in soul—I really did,—when I was taken into the shop for the first time. I had already caught sight of a half-finished little wooden cabinet on the wall—probably begun by some other patient. I could do better than that. I'd already planned out in my mind just what sort of a cabinet I'd make—with double-doors, cut out with an old-fashioned jig-saw that I glimpsed in one corner. The quiet, sad-faced young man, who ran the shop and the hydrotherapy too, listened while I explained what I was going to do. Then he said:

"Later perhaps. Much later. Your work is all laid out for you, Mr. Edwards. Just come over here."

And what do you suppose my—my work was? Why, boring holes in a board with an augur. One hole after another, in a straight line. Every hole had to be bored so that the line passed exactly through its center. At first I laughed and then I bored. The sad-faced young man—I understand that he is an author and writes plays in his spare time—didn't seem to think much of my work. Six of the holes were off-center. I was told to do it all over again. Then I got mad. I spoke quite violently, for I had had, as I say, a bad night. "Those are my orders," said the hydrotherapic - carpenter - shop - author. "You'll have to bore the holes or else go back to bed." He put out his hand to ring for my nurse. I

understood; he too was classifying me as a "mental case." So I surrendered.

But the baskets!—If you've never tried to twist the slippery, soaked reeds round little posts and into holes choked full of sawdust, with big clumsy hands like mine, you can't appreciate what I went through those first three mornings.

One hour carpenter-shop. Rest for an hour. Then one hour basketry. The first morning, when a rather faded, delicate-looking lady walked into my room with her arms full of reeds and other stuff, I looked so surprised and puzzled, I guess, that she must have thought I was more of a "mental case" than the nurse had given her to suppose. But I'll say this for that frail-looking spinster—she certainly had pluck and perseverance, and she had fingers and a lower arm of steel. To see her twist those infernal round reeds made you feel that she could do the same thing to the poker, if she wanted to—and if you didn't do what she told you. Besides, I felt sorry for her. I supposed she was paid by the hour, and I didn't want her to lose anything through me; I wanted to be polite. I tell you she wasn't a nurse; she was a real lady. (Not that nurses aren't ladies, of course. But they're nurses first and ladies afterward, if they have time. Or rather, I guess, if their parents had had time, once.) So for two mornings, I did my best with those baskets.

But, as I've said, on the third morning my patience gave out. I'd had another bad night, had

waked at four. Then I had fallen asleep at seven, and my ray of sunshine didn't want to disturb me. So my breakfast got cold; and if there is one thing in life that utterly spoils my day and my temper as well, it is cold or lukewarm coffee. They let me off the carpenter-shop. But there was no begging off the baskets. But by this time I didn't care. I'd let the basket-lady give me one more lesson. That should be the last. For I was absolutely determined to get up, after she had gone, to dress myself and get out. I'd telephone my son Tom from the station, after I had got my railway ticket and was headed for home. I was getting no better. I was worse— Or, if not exactly worse, at least this wasn't the place for me to get well in. I had even jotted down on the one sheet of note-paper, on which I was allowed to write my one letter a week (me, mind you, one letter a week—me!) a telegram to O'Connor, my head man at the Plant.

So, I thought, as it's for the last time, I'll try at least to be polite to the basket-lady. But it seemed as if the very devil were in the reeds that morning. Or I guess my fingers were at fault. For the thought of getting up and out of this place had made me tense, and my hands weren't steady. Anyhow, I got madder and madder. The basket-lady would sail in every five minutes or so and look at what I had done. And, on this particular morning, she ripped out every single reed I'd woven two separate times.

But I'm a determined man. I wanted to please that lady. So when she slipped out to another patient for the third time, I put all my energy on weaving that corner of the basket that had been already woven and pulled out twice that morning. But somehow the thing would not go right. The moist reeds kept slipping out of their places, and when I got one into its hole, it wouldn't stay put. Finally, the split-off end of one of the reeds ran into my finger, right at the base of the nail. Then I blew up.

"——!!" (I'll leave blanks for what I actually said.)

And, grabbing up the basket (it was just a wooden bottom with about three courses of woven reeds—rottenly woven too), I hurled it from me just as hard as I could throw. And when I was a kid in high school I used to pitch, sometimes, for "The Nine."

The basket, with the reeds sticking out on all sides of it, went sailing through the air, over the end of my bed, and straight for the door of my room. But just then the door opened. I saw a man standing in the doorway, saw his hand go up and catch the basket on the fly.

"How's that, Umpire?" says he.

And, somehow, just like clock-work, I answered: "Out! Next player to the bat."

And then I sat staring and sucking my hurt finger.

That was the way we met, my Fear-Hunter and

I. Of course I had met him before, in his office. But somehow, that time didn't count for me. And I date the beginning of my getting well from the moment when he said, "How's that, Umpire?"

He took a chair by my bed, shooed the nurse and the basket-lady out of the room, and looked at me.

"Better take your finger out of your mouth," he said, "for by your looks, as well as by your actions, I see that your mind is overloaded with distressing, perhaps poisonous matter. Better get rid of it."

One thing, before everything else, I will say for this doctor of mine, he's the easiest person to talk to that I ever met. He just sits and looks at you, and smiles, a very little; and you begin to talk right away. You *want* to talk; you couldn't stop if you tried. After he has left you you blame yourself for being a wind-bag, and for letting a clever fellow pump you dry, and you wonder what Cousin Amy Jinglepencil back home would say, if she knew you'd told a perfect stranger all about Uncle Joe's whiskey-drinking and about Cousin Frank's idiot child. Only, while he's with you, he never seems or feels like a stranger at all.

Anyway, that morning, he had all my present troubles out of me in about ten minutes. And before five of those minutes had passed I knew that I had been a hasty fool, and that I wasn't going to leave the Nursing Home, at least not immediately.

I am not going to try to describe my Fear-Hunter. I couldn't anyway. It interested me to try to

describe the Chief; I wanted to keep my picture of him, because I felt that it would help me, some day, to read it over. It was a valuable thing, an unusual thing, that I didn't want to lose. But about this other doctor of mine, there's nothing that seems, at first sight anyway, so very valuable, or so very unusual. He and the Chief must be about of the same age. Between forty-five and fifty. But with the Chief you think, "How young he looks for a man of his age"; while with this other doctor you say to yourself, "For a man of his age, how old and worn he looks." The Chief reminds you of some big, self-contained, kindly force, like a great river, moving slowly on, turning mills and dynamos and creating light and power for millions of distant people who've never even seen the river. But this other man is like nothing I know, nothing in the country that I used to know so well as a boy. Except perhaps one thing, and it seems a silly sort of thing to compare a man with. But, on our farm, behind the door of the old barn, where I was allowed to have my little shop, there stood an old scythe. Used once to cut hay, in the days before the horse-driven reapers of my boyhood, and in my own day brought out only occasionally to cut the high grass back of our house. It must have been originally of tough, fine steel. For it had been whetted and whetted until the cutting edge was worn nearly through half its width. And it was still sharper, a better cutter, than ever. "This here old scythe," our hired man

Eli used to say, as he sharpened the blade with his whetstone; "why, you could cut bricks with it. Or air. Hard or soft. I could shave with it, I guess. Only, of course," and then he'd rub his stubby chin, "that'd be pretty hard on the scythe."

Well, somehow, my Soul-Doctor was like that. He could cut through anything. And get right at the heart of it. But you saw that his sharpness, his cutting edge, came from having been whetted on so many kinds of whetstones, and so often. He was, if you understand me, sort of worn thin in the process. Worn thin—and sharp—in body and mind. That's what he was.

As for the heart of him and the soul of him (if that's the place where he keeps some of the things he gave me) well, whoever reads this will find out all about that for himself.

He was tall, and he was thin, with a slight stoop to his shoulders. His hair was gray, not white like the Chief's, but a sort of yellowish, dirty gray. And he liked gray clothes, loose sloppy sorts of steelish-gray suits, without any shape to them, and with lots of room inside them. And with big wide pockets. Pockets that were always full of books. I never saw him without a book. I believe he eats and sleeps with one, perhaps with several. And he took one out of his side-pocket, on that third morning of mine in the Nursing Home, and held it in his hand while I poured out my troubles to him. A leather-covered fat little volume it was. As I got near the

end of the recital of my various woes, I'd begun to feel that perhaps things weren't so bad as I'd thought, when the sight of a couple of stray reeds on the bed and of a red spot of blood from my pricked finger stirred me all up again.

"And look what they've made me do!" I protested, pointing to the reeds.

"I know," he answered. "I ought to. You threw it at me." And he held up the half-finished smashed mess I had been working on.

"Right enough for nervous children," I snorted, "but not for a man like me."

He nodded and looked very serious. I learned to distrust that serious look.

"Nationally advertised too," he murmured. "I've not forgotten. I, like millions of other men, 'completed my toilette' this morning."

I began to feel a little uncomfortable. I'd never really been much stuck on that picture of me on our containers. Always wanted to have another better one made; only it would have cost such a lot. So I switched over to my other grievance.

"And they've been making me bore holes—holes—one after another, on a straight line—in a board."

The Doctor's face relaxed a little; he snuggled down into the depths of his low chair and swung both feet over the side of it. A favorite attitude of his—clumsy, rather undignified, but sort of comfortable-looking for him—and comforting, somehow, and intimate for the person he was talking to.

"Ah well," he sighed, in that curious soft intonation of his that makes Yankees think he comes from the South, and Southerners from New England (both of them think wrong), "after all, it may help you to remember that St. Paul made tents. Of course," he added, "baskets *are* smaller than tents. But then, you yourself are, I suppose, somewhat smaller than St. Paul. Put it in the form of an algebraic proportion. Baskets are to tents as you are to St. Paul. The product of the means is equal to the product of the extremes.—And as for boring holes in a piece of wood," he got up from his chair, walked to the window, and spoke over his shoulder, "why, you might possibly remember that someone much greater than St. Paul spent his youth in a carpenter-shop. He bored holes, I imagine; lots of them. And I know he bored them patiently and well."

I felt, without any apparent reason, horribly ashamed. And uncomfortable. Somehow, I'm not used to talking about religion. And the Doctor stood looking out of the window for quite a few minutes. I got thinking again of that fool picture of mine on our containers, and when he turned round again, I sort of blurted out, glad to change the subject somehow.

"I guess you're right about that picture." (Of course, he hadn't really said a word about it directly.) "When I get home I'm going to have all

the old stuff scrapped, and get out new advertising matter. It'll set us back tens of thousands of dollars. And O'Connor, my head man, he'll think I'm crazy for fair."

By this time the Doctor was back in his former position in the chair by my bedside. He nodded slowly.

"Too important to be decided here and now," he said. I felt as if he'd dashed me with cold water. I had thought he was going to pat me on the back, and tell me what a fine unselfish fellow I was. But not at all. He pointed to the little table at the head of my bed. "I see pencil and paper there. Just tear up what you've already written." (It was my telegram to O'Connor saying that I was coming home that same day.) "And now write this, and read it over at least three times a day. 'In my present condition, the desire for change is to be distrusted and resisted. It is a perfectly well-known symptom of my illness that I feel dissatisfied with whatever I am doing and want to do something else. Just as you restrain the desire to cough, when you have an inflamed throat, so that the inflammation may the more quickly subside, so restrain the desire for change. If you yield to it, if you *do* do something else, then that something else will shortly become distasteful, and you will be anxious to do something else-else. This will exhaust you. The more you permit yourself to cough, the sorer

your throat gets, and by and by you may *have* to cough. Therefore, distrust all desire for change, and resist it.' "

After taking down the first few words in full, I had dropped into shorthand.

"Finished?" he asked. I nodded. "Shorthand then. That is a useful asset. It will help you a lot. Now, put that sheet away carefully. I want you to copy what you've just written into another book, this evening. And, by the way, have you any especial tastes in blank-books, ledgers, diaries?"

I stared at him. Puzzled, but getting rather interested.

"I don't quite get you," said I. "But I've always had a sort of kindly feeling toward blank-books that have red leather backs and corners. Ruled pages, you know. With margins, ruled in red. When I was a kid, on the farm, there was a book—like that—that my father used to—to keep his accounts in, I guess. Though, Heaven knows, he couldn't have had many accounts to keep."

"Excellent." This was the first word of approval I had had from him. It kind of warmed me inside. "This afternoon I'll send you up half a dozen blank-books like that to choose from. Better choose a fairly fat one. And I wish I could find you one of the old 'Secret Diaries' that had a lock on the side, so that you could wear the key round your neck. For I want you to have an absolute assurance that no one—no one on earth—can ever read

what's written there without your knowledge. However, if you write in shorthand, and keep the book, when not in use, locked up in the drawer of that table by your bed (I'll see that a proper lock is put on it), you ought to feel safe. Now I want that book to serve you in a twofold way: first as a record, and secondly as an emotional outlet. I want you to write something—how much or how little I don't care—but *something,* each day. And let that something be divided into two parts. First, a short record of the day's doings, but especially of the things that I dictate to you, things that I believe are valuable, not because I've thought or said them, but because I've got them from someone or some place of tried importance. Secondly, write about yourself. That is, your reactions to the day's happenings, to what you've read, or heard. If you don't like some or all of the things I say, why, write that down, and give your reasons. If you feel discouraged and depressed—well, write down how you feel, and why you feel like that. But keep the last fifty pages or so in the book for a special purpose. On those pages I want you to set down the story of your whole life, just as much of it as you can remember. No one will ever see what you've written unless you wish it, so you can write freely, fully. Begin to-night by writing down the very first things in your life that you can remember. Call the first chapter, 'Earliest Memories,' and set down every single thing you can recollect about your mother,

your father, your relatives, the house you lived in, the bed you slept in, the things you loved, and the things you hated and feared. You'll be surprised, when you start writing, what a lot of half-forgotten things will swim to the surface of your mind. We'll make your seventh year the limit of the first chapter. And then Chapter Two can start with your first experiences outside the home, at school.—All this may be hard, at first. But I want you to persevere. You'll get intensely interested as you go on.—And please, make sure of one thing. Don't go to sleep without having written at least a few lines in the record and reaction part of your book. Even if you have such a headache that you can't see, at least set down that fact and your feelings of rage or annoyance before you lay your head on the pillow. —Now, of course, as I have said, no one is ever to see that book of yours. Not even I. Indeed I least of all. I want you to feel perfectly free to discuss me or swear at me, in writing, all you like. But, one thing I shall do. Every time that I see you I shall ask you, 'Have you written up your book every night?' and I shall expect an honest answer. —Do you, as you say, 'get me' now?"

I didn't exactly know what to say. I couldn't refuse, of course. And yet it seemed rather a sort of childish game. That is, if it was part of the treatment that I had come all these miles and spent all this money to get.

"Seems sort of unnecessary," was all I said. For

it had suddenly struck me that, if the Doctor never saw the book, I could get off with jotting down a dozen words or so each night. As for the "Story of My Life"—well, I never really intended to do that at all. Fine waste of time, a thing like that, I thought. The Doctor was looking at me with that same twitching of the corners of his mouth which his ragged moustache could not hide.

"It is not my habit to be constantly quoting from this book." He held up the leather-covered volume that he had been holding in his hand all the time. "But I recommend you to read the story of a certain Naaman. You have, however, doubtless, a Bible of your own?"

There he was, on religion again, making me feel uncomfortable. Just as I was getting interested, too, in something else. I only shook my head. I hadn't come all this way—and I say it again (I mean I said it then)—hadn't spent all this money, to go to Sunday School at my age.

"Please note down the name," the Doctor went on. I couldn't refuse to do that. "N-a-a-m-a-n. I won't give you the exact reference. There is an Index at the back of this Bible. Please look up the story of this Naaman and read it. He also was, I suppose, 'nationally advertised,' and he expected that a 'big man' ought to be treated by big doctors in a big way. And, if it hadn't been for a little Jewish maid and his servants, he might never have discovered his mistake."

"My wife hates Jewish help," I put in. "Won't have a Jew servant in the house."

If I'd touched off a tin of dynamite by mistake, I couldn't have been more surprised. The Doctor gave one grunt, then a sort of stifled snort, and let out a laugh that seemed almost to tear him in two. Evidently I'd made a good joke. He wiped his forehead with his handkerchief and said, "Excuse me, my accursed sense of humor. So sorry." And then I wasn't so sure that I had made a joke, after all. But he soon got down to business again.

"You understand what I want now, I think. As soon as your blank-book comes, write down in it on the first page, under date of to-day, what I dictated to you a few minutes ago. Then find out about Naaman—I'll spell it again for you.—After that, write what you please.—Now I've half an hour left for you. And I'd advise you, if you haven't a very retentive memory, to take an occasional note of what I say, especially of the things that you don't quite understand, so that we can clear them up the next time I come. Better lean back comfortably in bed, and put your paper on top of this Bible, so that you can write with ease. And if I say anything that puzzles you, or interests you—especially if I say anything that makes you tearing mad—stop me, and let's find out what the trouble is. More than half the mistakes that physicians make in treating their patients arise from misunderstandings. The doctor thinks that the patient understands, but the patient

doesn't, and is too shy to say so. Or else the patient imagines that the doctor, being able to read minds as well as bodies, grasps intuitively all the patient's difficulties, while the doctor hasn't really grasped them at all. So don't hesitate to interrupt. I want to tell you a few things about fear.—Never mind why. You'll understand that, I hope, as we go on.—We'll call our chapter for this morning 'The Origin of Fear.'"

CHAPTER VI

THE ORIGIN OF FEAR

If I boiled down what my Fear-Hunter said at each one of these "conferences" of his, as he called them, I could give a sort of tabloid lecture that would be, I think, about as useless to me as some of those fool books that people write about "Why Worry" and "Be Not Afraid." And what's of no use to me couldn't be of no use to anyone that I might want to pass this book on to, if it's ever finished. For the things that helped me most weren't the statements of fact, or the general outlines, but rather the little "between-talk," the sparks that were sort of struck out between his mind and mine. I dare say, too, that I've forgotten a lot that he said. I took notes only of what he absolutely dictated, and of the other things that specially puzzled or interested me. You mustn't imagine that he sat down in a chair and *lectured* to me. The word "lecture" made him furious. He wasn't lecturing as if he were someone who knew a lot, like a professor passing on authoritative information to his pupils. We were having a "conference," he and I. And what I had to say was just as important, perhaps

more important, than any ideas that he had to contribute.

So our first "conference," as well as I can remember, began like this.

"Stevenson," said the Doctor, fishing another book, a little green one, out of his left-hand pocket, "may be rather strong meat for the first course. But I don't think it will be dangerous to you. You won't tend to identify yourself with the Young Man with the Cream Tarts, but rather with Prince Florizel.—So I think you may read this first volume of the *New Arabian Nights,* especially the first story in it. It will give you a creepy, crawly, emotional sensation that we call fear—not unpleasant, because the fear has no association with ourselves. And just write out this sentence from the first chapter, at the top of your notes: 'People trifle with love. Now I deny that love is a strong passion. Fear is the strong passion.'

"It is strange how seldom we talk about fear and yet how often it gets into our minds and messes things up generally. We get into the habit of identifying fear with cowardice. And every man is sure that he isn't a coward. Women never think about whether they are brave or not; they have to be, most of them. Later on I'll try to make clear to you what I mean by fear, what its origins are, how it works, and with what appalling results. Then we can discuss some of the fearful—the different types of people who are afraid, in one way or another.

And, finally, we shall try to find some antidote, some methods of casting out fear, or of making it harmless.

"I know you are wondering why I chose this subject for my talk with *you*. This minute you're patting yourself on the chest and are saying to yourself, 'I'm no coward.' Well, I don't think you are. If you were you wouldn't be here. But I've been forced to the conclusion that the greater number of those people who come to us nowadays, asking for help and complaining of general lack of energy, of loss of interest in life, of a digestion upset, a circulation impaired, of a thousand-and-one mental and physical maladjustments and aches, are all, more or less, infected by the emotion we call fear. Utterly poisoned by it, some of them. So that, in dealing with your case, I can't be sure of helping you until I have, first of all, cleared the fear-reactions out of your system."

[I was listening now with both ears. He had made a good guess about me. But I wasn't going to let him know it. Indeed, at the time, I hadn't any realization of how large a part fear was playing in my troubles. The Doctor, who had been sitting quietly—for him—began to wriggle round in his chair. I came to recognize the symptoms; they came on whenever he had to talk about himself, a thing he didn't like at all.]

"You have a powerful, logical mind, Mr. Edwards," he went on. And I reached for the one cigar allowed me before noon each day. I was feeling rather more comfortable. "Unless you had it, you could not be the successful man that you are. So I know that I can't impress you by any statement unless it is backed up by something more than just my say-so. If a man gave you advice about some stock—American Woolens, let's say—and yet had never been inside a woolen mill and had never come into contact with any important woolen manufacturer—why, you'd not give much weight to what he said. So, in order to make you really accept what I've just told you, I'll have to explain a little about myself, so that you may see what the personal experience is on which I base my statements." He hesitated a moment. Then he went on: "One touches life at rather unusual angles——"

"How's that?" I interposed. "Whom do you mean by 'one'?"

The Doctor shrugged his shoulders in a sort of helpless way. "No use to try to hide behind a grammatical construction. When I said 'one,' I meant I—me." I waved my pencil at him, and he started all over again, sort of wincing at all the "I"s he had to use. For every time he tried to crawl out with a "one," I pretended I didn't understand. "One has—all right, then—I have to touch life—modern life, from rather unusual angles. I see it not as many of my colleagues do, as all of one

piece, or of one kind. This doctor sees nothing but children, sick children; another sees only women, pregnant women, or sick women; and so it goes, one man seeing only one class, down to the vanishing general practitioner, who still sees only one class, people who are sick and who have 'sent for the doctor.'—Now—I—or a man like myself—he—just by chance—happens to see all sorts and conditions of men, women, and children. He lives——"

"Who lives?" I interposed again, this time with a grin.

"Oh, damn!—I live then—in a place where I am in touch, for a part of each day, with young healthy people—young men, mostly, who come to me with all their mental troubles and their physical accidents. I'm supposed to have a general oversight of their health, from a broken leg to a broken (as they think) heart. And among this group of normal, usually healthy young people, I find the same disturbing elements of fear. And more often and in stranger combinations than you would expect. Secondly, I am called in frequently by the chief medical officer to our courts to help him in the mental and physical examination of delinquents—what you call criminals. From unruly children—immature thieves and rebels before the Juvenile Court up to or down to the professional hold-up man and the most brutal murderer. And, as I delve into their past lives, I find, so very often, this same thing, fear in some form or other, working at the foundations of

life and responsible for so much harm—so much harm that might, perhaps, have been avoided. Then, I see a good deal of the poor. The local charitable agencies sometimes get me to work on cases of poverty or industrial maladjustment that seem to have some mysterious mental element in them. And here, not always of course, but often, I come across fear again. Finally, at that little office of mine which you visited last week, I see during the afternoons people of quite a different type. Your type, many of them. Well-to-do people, successful men, socially prominent women, the difficult disappointing children of the newly rich, the last member of some old inbred stock. Or else men and women, less well off, who, under the stress of anxiety about themselves, have scraped together enough money for the journey and come here to us, asking for help—'for the love of God and for sweet charity's sake,' as they used to say in the Middle Ages.—I've heard rich people, often enough, make sly jokes about the big fees that are supposed to turn us doctors into bloated bond-holders; but I can tell you that no one of these people who have had just money enough to pay their way to our office doorsteps, and stand there with empty pockets, has ever been turned away.—Well, these patients, whom I see, as I saw you, in that quiet little office of mine, come from nearly every State in the Union; some are from South America, and from Canada come a great many more. So I get specimens, as it were, from almost

every walk of American life.—Finally, after I have closed my office door on the last of these, I am, for the rest of the day, absorbed by what we'll call an academic atmosphere. I have some slight connection with the University—with the medical as well as with the philosophical faculty (that's how I met your son) and here I am brought into contact with men who use their minds at the expense of their bodies; with scholars, discoverers, men of research, philosophers, philologians, chemists. They are very busy men; most of them work harder, work for longer hours, than even a great executive like yourself. But even among them—and I move among them not as a physician but as a very humble disciple—I find so often the same source of uneasiness, of useless waste of mental energy—the same results of fear. Now you know on what experience I base my statements."

"You certainly ought to have some idea of what you're talking about," I said. "The only thing I don't understand is how you ever get time to sleep."

"I—am a perfectly unimportant element in this situation," the Doctor answered, with a sideward movement of his hand, as if he were sweeping himself aside into the waste-basket. "What I want to get you to understand is the objective result of the reaction of the unimportant factor 'I' on an unusual environment. I tell you, Mr. Edwards, if I could cure fear—wipe it out by some magic formula or dis-

solve it with some patent medicine—I'd be a happy man. For I should be able to help the greater part of those who come for help to me. And, after all, that's what I'm here for; that's my job, the beginning and the end of it. But there's one thing that I have discovered. And that's what I've been leading up to thus far."

He paused abruptly; got up from his chair; sat down on the edge of my bed, and took one of my hands between both his.

"Extend the fingers, please, and separate them." He held my tensely extended hand between his two palms for a minute. "Now relax." He turned my hand over and softly pinched the ends of my fingers. "Determination," he said, half to himself; "almost obstinacy. Rather materialistic. But sensitive, to a certain degree. And," he added, as if in disgust, "full of little twitches, and shakes and shiverings." Then, as he put my hand down on the sheet, he looked at me suddenly, straight in the face.

"How much," he said, "does your religion mean to you?"

If he had hit me in the face instead of staring at it, I couldn't have been more surprised. I felt embarrassed, and more than a little angry. Here was I, a sick man, waiting to get cured, and my doctor was asking, not about my digestion, or my sleep, but about my religion. I began to clear my throat. I was going, I guess, to ask him what in thunder my

religion mattered to him, but luckily, before I could make a fool of myself, he spoke again.

> [Here's another thing I'll say for this Doctor. He seemed to know, sort of instinctively, when you were going to make an idiot of yourself with some senseless remark, and he'd stop you in time. This made you feel grateful, as soon as you realized what you *might* have said.]

"The reason I ask is twofold. During our first interview, in my office, we went over your life-history fairly carefully." (I began to get red; "carefully" wasn't the word, indecently rather.) "But, among all that you told me, there was no mention of any present religious attitude. I got, you know, your boyish religious reactions. I got all the clubs and associations that you, as a man, belong to now. But I heard nothing about—about any church."

"Because I don't belong to any," I interrupted. "I don't mean that I'm against religion. I've even gone once or twice with my wife to her Constructive Thought meetings. But if you really join any sort of denomination these days, they want you to do so many things—be on committees, raise money for a parsonage, or advise the deacons about investments, or—you know. All that takes *time*. And I haven't just had the time to give."

The Doctor nodded. He seemed to understand perfectly.

"Of course not," he said. "Besides, not a fair

exchange. You giving your valuable time, and getting—nothing."

"Oh, I don't know about that."

"Well, then, if you don't, I do. But I had another reason for my question. I'd jot this fact down in your notes. It's important.—Now, during all the years of my practice—seeing all the various types of people that I've mentioned, finding so many of them obsessed or poisoned with fear in one way or another—I have been impressed by one fact, or rather the absence of one fact. I mean that there was a certain class of persons that I never *did* see in my office, a class that never came to me for help, or that I never found needing help and not knowing it—people who either were not bothered by fear or who had found some remedy of their own against it. As soon as I began to notice this fact, I started to keep a list of the types of patients that I seldom, if ever, see.—You, as a practical man, must understand what I'm driving at.—If I could find out the kind of people who were immune to fear, perhaps I could discover the secret of their immunity. And then I should have found what I had been looking for all these years."

> [Now this interested me. It sounded so common-sense. Like finding that Insulin stuff to cure diabetes.]

"Well, come on; what was the secret?—tell us," I blurted out.

The Doctor went back to his chair with maddening slowness, and threw his legs over one side of it again.

"If I told you," he said slowly, "you'd laugh. You'd think it wasn't any secret at all. Besides, I'm not absolutely sure that I've found it. It doesn't always work.—However, I can tell you this, and you can draw your own conclusions; I'll tell you the kinds of people that I *don't* see in my office, not as a general rule. So far as my experience goes, the people who do not seem to be assailed and poisoned by fear are those who believe and practice the Christian religion. And by the Christian religion I don't mean a religion man-made, or man-given, but the Christian religion as it was established and delivered to twelve eye-witnesses by a Person who was both God and Man—a Person who did not merely live in Palestine hundreds of years ago, going about doing good and then disappearing forever to some immeasurably distant Heaven, but who is, by means of His own appointment, still present on earth—who still walks with men, who still has earthly habitations where He may be found, and who is more intimately united with those who follow Him now than He ever was during the days of His human life in Galilee. I tell you you that people who believe and practice the religion that centers around this Personality seem to have an antidote against fear. At any rate, I never see them.—Don't

misunderstand me. I'm not asserting that this form of religious faith is objectively true. I'm not saying that I accept it myself. I am simply putting before you a definitive fact, a fact as clearly proven to me as any other fact of my long professional experience."

"Then," I put in lamely, for I was much disappointed; I had expected something so different; "then, you think that if a man got all fussed up with worries and fears, they'd all vanish if he believed in God."

"I never said any such thing," snapped the Doctor. "Believing doesn't help. You, in some vague way, believe, I suppose. I was talking about something very different—the *practice* of the Christian religion.—But let's drop this.—I only wanted to put you in possession of a fact that I have noticed, and that, I think, may possibly be helpful to you later.—But not now.—You've got a long, long way to go yet. Your mind, if you don't object to my saying so, is like a bed of good earth chock full of weeds. We've got to tear up the weeds first; but while we're doing that, I want to drop a seed or two, now and again, in any clear spot of earth. It may grow. Maybe it won't. Perhaps it's the wrong kind of seed for your kind of ground. If it is, it won't take root. And no one will be hurt."

"Just pick up your notes again. Before I go I want to say something about the origin of fear.

"Like everything else in this world, you can look at it from the standpoint of tradition or from that of modern science. It's a mistake to try to mix the two. Any sane man's mind ought to have room for at least two points of view. If you take the traditional one, you might say, I suppose, that fear came into the world with Adam's fall. For you'll remember that after he and Eve had eaten of the apple, they hid themselves from God, who asked them why they hid. And Adam said, 'I was afraid.' Look up that passage. I'm leaving you my Bible—Genesis, chapter three, I think. You——"

He stopped again suddenly, shot out his hand, and took from me the Bible that I had picked up from where he had laid it on the bed beside me.

"That's the third time this morning," he snapped. I jumped; my nerves were all on edge anyhow. I got mad.

"You've no right to talk to me like that," I snarled. "I didn't come here to—to—" A sudden feeling of sorrow for myself swept over me. Here I was, far from home, in a strange house, and this man, before whom I had first been ashamed and who had now begun to interest and to make me feel comfortable—he, of all men, was angry and cross. Doing what, at home, we used to call "picking on me." And I didn't know why.

In a minute he was sitting at my bedside again, patting my shoulder.

"Laddie, laddie," he said; "I'm sorry."

[This was the first time he ever called me "Laddie"—me a big ugly man, older than himself. In after time I used to be on the lookout for that word; he only used it when he was especially stirred up. There was a softness in his voice at those times that often touched me more deeply than I cared to admit.]

"It was my fault for not explaining at the beginning. Look now, three times, this morning, I've chanced to cite the Bible. This book here. And every time I've done it you've put on a sort of smug, uncomfortable expression. As if your shoes were too tight, and you ashamed to refer to shoes in mixed company. Oh, I know that look. Children, I suppose, assume it first as a sort of protection, when they're called in from play in the backyard to speak to the minister and to have him ask them to recite a verse 'from the Scriptures.' You see it, sometimes, on men's faces at a club, where everyone is talking either business or politics, until some man in the crowd, who's always been 'a good sport' up to now, begins to tell of how he went to hear Billy Sunday and got converted. And how he wants 'you other fellows to go and hear Billy and find out what a fine manly chap—' And so on. And the rest of you sit there and look just the way you looked at me a minute ago. As much as to say, 'Why, the poor fish! He used to be such a good sport, too. Remember that risky tale he told about

the old farmer and his lost cow?' Why is it that the ordinary man of to-day can't talk about what he calls 'religion' without putting on that idiotic, insulting look? Religion's a part of everyday life, or it ought to be. But, with most of you, the minute a man refers to anything 'religious' on a weekday, you either sneer or laugh—or, what's just as bad, you feel embarrassed, shy, and ill at ease. The only people I've ever met who are as much at home in a church as they are at their own fireside, and who can talk of religion as simply and as freely as they talk about the price of meat or the next election, are—those same people whom I never see as patients in my office—the people who believe and practice the Christian religion."

"But what kind of Christian religion?" I interrupted, thinking that I had caught him in a tight place. "There are so many kinds of Christians. And yet, I suppose, there is only one Christian religion. At least, there ought to be only one."

To my surprise—he was always surprising me—he was as pleased as if I'd given him fifty dollars.

"Good boy!" he exclaimed. "Why, you're listening and following and remembering.—You're right, of course. I often try to get out of the difficulty by thinking of Christians in terms of cows. It's a poor analogy, and easily exploded. But, look at it like this. Here, in a big pasture, you have a whole herd of cows; all kinds—Guernseys, Holsteins, all the different breeds and marks. To a man who is really

on the lookout for differences, there are ten or twelve different kinds of animals in that field. And yet, to the wider vision, to the man who is interested not *only* in cows, but also in horses and dogs and cats —why, they're *all* cows.—You think that out.— But what I wanted to impress on you was this. Don't put that smug, shy religious protection mask on your face if I happen to mention any religious concept, or even quote from the Bible. Remember, I am not now suggesting that you read certain passages in this black leather-covered book as if there were anything unusual behind the words themselves. "This," he tapped the Bible, "is the record in religious and historical matters of an ancient race. It contains also the earliest documents that were produced by the Christian believers. Or rather, translations of them. Very faulty translations sometimes. I want you to look at it as literature; like any other book. It's written in most excellent English. And it wouldn't do you any harm to learn some of it by heart; it might improve your English style and keep you from getting tied hand and foot to the dictation business English of your daily correspondence. In the King James version of the Scriptures you won't find any 'Yours of 4th inst. at hand,' or 'have not seen prices per your list.' So get in the habit of reading in it, not for any religious feeling, but just because it's worth reading. David and Goliath, for example. One of the great dramatic descriptions of our literature."

Someone knocked at the door. It was the nurse, with my eggnog. The Doctor took it from her and shooed her out again.

"I'll have to be off," he said. "But one thing more for your notes. The scientific idea about the origin of fear.

"It really doesn't make much difference how you look at it. From the traditional point of view, and taking the record of Genesis as the Eastern mind's picture of a past process or event, the coming of fear into the world was associated with man's developing or falling downward from some higher level that had once been his, while our modern scientific idea shows us fear as a sort of persisting element from a lower level, on which man once lived, but from which he has gradually progressed. In the first case you meet fear on the way down; in the other you meet it on the way up. But remember two important matters just here. A process beginning at a higher level and tending downward, and a process beginning at a lower level and tending upward, may look exactly the same to anyone who does not think in terms of high and low, but only in terms of time. Or to anyone who is immeasurably removed from the scene of action. I mean this. One man may be climbing a hill, another going down it; but, if I look down at them both from the towering height of a mountain, I see only one thing, two men moving. Whether one is ascending or the other descending means nothing

to me. All I am interested in is whether they are going in the same direction or in opposite ones, whether they are not, after all, moving up or down on what to me looks like a level, moving both of them toward the same goal. Then, secondly, you will notice, in Genesis, that the first thing Adam meets on his fall away from God is fear. And, if you take the scientific view, almost the first thing that the higher animals or man meet on their way upward from the so-frequently mentioned primordial slime or ooze (not a very pretty word, that; there is no King James version of the doctrine of evolution) is, again, the emotion of fear. Psychologists will tell you that fear lies on the lowest levels of your subconsciousness, away down there in the Dark Kingdom, where are gathered together all the waste, all the ghosts, all the powers and dominations from which man has gradually emancipated himself in his progress upward. It is from this rubbish heap that, now and then, something—felt instinctively to be dangerous, threatening—reaches up a cold, bony hand and lays it suddenly upon our warm, beating hearts.—Fear.

"Just cast your mind back, in imagination, along the whole age-long course of man's evolution—or only along that short part of it that reaches from monkey to man—and try to sum up the whole inheritance of fear that comes to each of us as we stand at the end of that long, long development. From the fear of the first land animals in their

unknown environment and its constant dangers, up to the fears of the last 'pithecanthropus erectus,' fascinated by the approach of some great reptile. Go into a big museum some day and look at the bones of those fearful monsters—the great lizards —all the Saurians—and think what it must have been to meet one of them when you were only just a little higher than a clever, easily frightened ape. Go into the snake-house in some zoölogical garden and, as you look at some of the big pythons, you won't have to ask yourself what it is that seems to stir uneasily in the lower levels of your consciousness, to make your hand shake a little and your heart beat faster—even now—after all these thousands and thousands of years. And from the fears of the first group of 'pithecanthropoi,' groping toward objective thought, with dangers on every hand, down to the earliest type of mankind, who lived in caves with narrow entrances, so that things—the enemy things outside—might not get in. Remember, too, that all along this line of advance the animals, or the men, who *weren't* devoured or crushed to death were the animals or the men who had been afraid—in time. And who had, therefore, escaped. The ones who had been afraid too late were abolished; and their fears died with them. But those who survived, thanks to having been afraid in time—not once but over and over again,—these handed down the tradition, the inheritance of fear. And think what an

enormous, what a powerful inheritance that must be."

I had gathered the bedclothes round me, and sat there, sort of cold and shivery up my back.

"I've never taken much stock in this monkey-theory business," I said, as he paused for a moment. "I'm not descended from a monkey. I know that."

"Well, then," the Doctor retorted, "if you still hold to the traditional view of Genesis, why do you stop with the believing part? That's not playing the game. The idea of a monkey ancestor hurts your American pride. So, you say you believe in the Bible. But you can't stop *there,* you know. Why not do a little of the practicing as well as the believing? You can't believe the religion, of which that Bible there is the product—not the source—and not practice what it is supposed to teach.—You're trying to escape a real difficulty in an unreal way.—Don't suppose that I or any thinking man minimizes the difficulties involved in what looks like the endless cruelty of Nature. How can it be the work of a good, of an omnipotent God? An old, old question. And every man has got to find the answer as best he can.—I haven't found it yet."

Then leaning back in his chair, he did something that I always disliked, because it gave me so much trouble; he quoted poetry. Only very seldom would he ever tell me where his quotations came from. And yet, as we got to know one another better, I

felt that his quotations meant something, and I was never satisfied until I found them. I nearly drove my nurses crazy, and the clerks at the Public Library too.

"Nature," he said, in his deep rolling voice; " 'Nature, red in tooth and claw with ravine, shrieks against my creed.' "

Now, usually, when I hear stuff like that—stuff that perhaps I ought to understand and don't—I just nod my head to make people think that I'm getting it, while, inside my own mind, I sort of sneer and say to myself, "Hot air" or "High-brow." But my doctor, although I'd only seen him twice, had stirred me up, had made me feel that what he said was important. I didn't want to lose anything. Besides, wasn't I paying for all this? So, when he shot off that poetry and looked sort of inquiringly at me, as much as to say, "That's so, isn't it?" I said, "Humph"—that is, I grunted. So he repeated his line. I've always been glad that I had courage enough at least to shake my head.

"Don't understand it?" he asked.

"No," said I, plucking up my courage, and determined to get what he meant, even if he did think me uneducated. "I do not."

To my surprise he didn't laugh, or say, sort of patronizingly, "Why, don't you know *that?*" Not at all.

"My fault, entirely," he said. "Forgive me. I'll explain."

And then he did just that, using everyday words, until I knew what the man who wrote that poetry was trying to say. Until I could repeat the words and enjoy saying them. That was the curious part. They got to sound good to me.

"Look here, Doc," I began, after I'd repeated the line for the sixth or seventh time; "I want to tell you something. Men like me often have to put up a bluff when we're talking with people like you. Sometimes it's as if we were speaking two different languages. I had some schooling once, but I suppose I've forgotten most of it. That man's name, Tennyson, I've heard it of course; but it doesn't mean anything to me now. And it's the same with a lot of other talk that, to you, is everyday stuff. If I could only say right out, when a man like you talks that way, that I don't understand, it wouldn't make much difference. I guess *you* wouldn't understand the technical terms we use in my business. But I'm ashamed to admit that I don't understand you. I pretend I do. If you believe me, you may go on talking about something else very important that's mixed up with what you said before, or that depends on it. And then, I'm like a schoolboy who has skipped a couple of lessons in his algebra and is trying to understand the lessons that follow. He can't, of course, because he doesn't understand what came before. If you don't believe me—why, you think I'm uneducated and pretentious. Either way there's a source of error, to one or the other of us. You

take it from me, if you ever hear a man of my kind criticizing something another man has said and calling it 'high-brow,' you can bet that he doesn't understand and that he's ashamed to admit it."

The Doctor came over to the bed and patted my shoulder. I really think that our kindly feeling for one another began just there. Up to this time, he'd been the Doctor, and I was just the—a patient.

"Right," he said. "The more mistakes we can rule out the better we'll be.—And now, since you feel as you do, and since you've listened patiently to what I've had to say—and have even taken some notes—suppose *you* tell me something about fear. What do you know about it from your own experience?"

Well, it may sound unbelievable, but I shut up like a clam. And the strange part is that, at the time, I didn't realize what a big part fear had played in my life. The queer things that I went through before going to bed—the feeling of emptiness in my insides, all my troubles taken together—I never connected them with what the Doctor had been talking about. Besides, I wasn't going to tell him about all that nonsense; why, he'd have thought I was crazy for sure. So I stammered, and spluttered:

"I—I—used to be scared, when I was a boy—of burglars."

"And that's all?"

"All I can remember." He looked at me in a kind

of disappointed way, like my old teacher in primary school, when the school committee would be in our room and she'd call on me to do some arithmetic, and I'd get tongue-tied dumb, not able to stammer out a single word.

"And when you were scared," he said, after a long pause, "what helped to un-scare you?"

That was an easy question; I knew the answer to it, and it came like a flash, all the more easily because I really wanted to answer his questions, if I could.

"Why, my mother. I used to sneak into her bed. —Of course, that was only when I was a little kid." (Curious, again; I *had* to add that last sentence. Yet I was over fourteen the last time that I—that I— What makes us men ashamed, I wonder, of loving and wanting our mothers? We're not ashamed of their love for us. We expect that. A poor lot we are, sometimes.)

And then, somehow, he must have asked me something else about mother, for I remember that I described her as best I could. Her blue eyes, and soft brownish hair; the way she walked; even the trick she had of scratching her nose with one of her steel needles while she was knitting by the window.

Anyway, I was in the midst of all this when the nurse knocked at the door again. Someone was on the telephone, asking for the doctor at his office.

"I must run," he said, snatching up his hat.

"Keep on with your routine. Baskets, hole-boring.—And don't forget to write in your blank-book. I'll see you again very soon. Meanwhile, work over in your mind all that you can remember of the first seven years of your life. Good-by."

As he stooped down over the bed to shake hands with me, I noticed in his button-hole a queer sort of colored ribbon, like the ones that so many men wear nowadays who've distinguished themselves in the big War. I'm not a curious man, as a rule. But if my Doctor had been decorated for something important—why, I wanted to know it. It would be something to tell that bunch of men in the office at home, who were always talking about the War, although none of them ever did anything more exciting than serve out uniforms, or count supplies in some Quartermaster's office. That's all I can say in excuse for myself. If I'd only known what I was stirring up, I'd have clapped a Yale lock on my mouth.

I put up my hand, as he bent over me, and touched the button.

"What's the decoration?" I asked. "I've never seen one like that. Something special, I suppose?"

He jumped away as if he'd been stung.

"Oh, it's nothing—nothing that would interest you," he said.

But I wasn't going to be put off as easily as that.

"Ah, go on, tell me about it," I urged (like an idiot). "I know you modest heroes hate to talk

about yourselves. But just tell me the name of it."

He stood looking down at me. And somehow I felt at once that I had touched him on the raw. I began some sort of a mumbled apology; he cut me short.

"This," he said, squinting down sidewise at the faded multicolored button in the lapel of his coat, "this is the sign-manual of my failure. The proof, if you needed one, that I am the degenerate offspring of a noble race. I wear it because I am proud, very proud of my father; not because I am proud of myself."

"I see," I put in hastily. "One of those hereditary badges or societies like the Sons of Veterans.—So you weren't in the War?"

He had gone over to the window and stood there looking out, swinging his hat in his hand.

"I come of an old Army family," he said, almost under his breath. "Regular Army. Distinguished, too, if I say it myself.—I've been in some few scraps and rows in different parts of the world. But when the Big Fight came—when I expected to slip into a commission as easily as into an old coat—why, they—" his voice almost broke—"they turned me down.—Unfit for duty.—Three times." He faced suddenly toward me and shook his fist in the air. "And what do you suppose they refused me for?—Blood-pressure!—Of all the idiotic things. And I stand here——"

I had jumped out of bed and grabbed him by the arm.

"What's that you said?" I almost shouted. "Blood-pressure? And that—that was over ten years ago. Why you——"

It was his turn to interrupt. Not with words, but with a look of sudden understanding that lighted up his whole face.

"So, *that's* it," he said. "I might have guessed.—Now you go straight back to bed and behave yourself. I'll see you again soon. Do as I've told you. Especially, get busy with your note-book. And, next time I come, be ready to tell me just when the blood-pressure devil began to frighten you.—And don't forget to look up Naaman. Meditate on Abana and Pharpar rivers of Damascus, in which you have bathed, and have *not* been made whole."

And with that he was gone. My Little Ray of Cheerfulness came in with my eggnog, half-an-hour late.

"Rather a peculiar man, the Doctor, isn't he?" she said, as she tried to hold the back of my head while I sucked the milk through a straw. Evidently she didn't approve of him highly; he hadn't given her a dog's notice anyway. "I wish you could see our other psychiatrist. He's younger, you know; more up-to-date. I'd just love to have him psychoanalyze me."

Some of the eggnog went down the wrong way:

I choked, and pushed away the glass from my lips, and her hand from the nape of my ticklish neck.

"That's enough," said I.

"But you haven't taken half of it," she protested.

"Oh, haven't I?" I snorted. "Well, I've had enough. And I don't mean the eggnog either."

That made her mad. She scarcely spoke to me again all that afternoon. And next morning I had a new nurse.

EXTRACT FROM THE RECORD BOOK OF MISS FAIRBEE'S NURSING HOME

Note by the Visiting Psychiatrist
Case of Mr. James E. Edwards

Mr. Edwards has the wrong type of nurse. Kindly tell his present nurse, Miss Dale, whose excellent work I remember very well in connection with young Mr. Franklin (Schizophrenia), that I expect to have a similar patient very soon, and wish her to save herself for the case. I suggest that you telephone the hospital and see if Mrs. Fothergill is free. Her nursing-name I have forgotten. There is also urgent need, I suspect, of a night-attendant. This person may, of course, be a graduate nurse; but I should expect her not to wear a uniform. I want a woman of about thirty-five, with bluish eyes, and rather brown wavy hair. (Nothing bobbed.) It is also absolutely essential that she should be able to knit—with old-fashioned steel

knitting-needles. Should you be able to find a suitable person of this type, I must see her before she goes on duty for the first time. It might also be well to consider a change—later on, in the Occupational Therapy. How about bookbinding? —But keep on with the carpenter-shop.

CHAPTER VII

THE MECHANISMS OF FEAR

It was three days before I saw my Doctor again. I had hoped that he would come in every day. On the second day after his visit I had piled up such a lot of questions to ask him that I wanted Miss Frolich to telephone for him.

Miss Frolich is my new nurse. Even her name has a pleasant sound. It means, in German, "happy" or "joyful." Not the merry-brightness of my Efficient Ray of Sunshine who fussed so cheerfully over me that I nearly yelled with nervousness, but a sort of quiet, steady, self-contained "happiness," with no frills or feathers. She doesn't talk much, but when she does say something, she means you to listen and—to do what she says. Pleasant voice, too. When the other one read aloud to me, with all sorts of dramatic intonations and pauses, she'd get me all stirred up; either so interested that I'd almost cry if she didn't have time to finish the story at one sitting, or else so bored and irritated by her stagy inflections that I counted the minutes until she had to stop. But Miss Frolich—her voice is so even it rests you, no matter what she reads.

And I can doze off in the midst of the most exciting tale. She's sort of economical in everything; I mean she doesn't waste anything—words, or actions, or even thoughts. She just sails along quietly, like one of those big sailing vessels I used to see on the Great Lakes when I was a kid. You don't want to get in her way, or she'd run you down. But if you're on the right side of her—on board of her—why, she'll take you where you want to go, every time.

Giving me my medicine, for instance. She doesn't come sidling up to the bed and say, "Eleven o'clock. Time for our tonic, isn't it? Ten drops to-day. One-two-three-four-five-six-seven-eight-nine-TEN.—*There* we are." Not she. She has the medicine all ready. And when the time for it comes she is there by my bed, with the glass in her hand. Not a word out of her. She simply stands there until I take it. I've tried complaining and fussing a little, just to see what would happen, but nothing happened at all. She let me talk, but she still stood there. And if I hadn't taken that medicine, she'd be standing there now. Everything goes like clock-work. And I'm beginning to stop worrying over what's going to happen next. I know Miss Frolich is there, and that she'll see that I get what's coming to me. Exactly that, and not the tiniest bit more—or less.

But the next most important happening has been the appearance of another nurse. Only she isn't a nurse at all. Just a sort of attendant. The first time

I saw her it was almost like a dream coming true. The doctors have been giving me some sort of a sedative to quiet me down during the early part of the night—those hours between eight and falling asleep, that have been such rotten times for me since I've been sick. Well, last night I had my supper, as usual, at half-past six, took my sedative —for some reason two hours earlier than usual— and lay in bed, reading over my day's notes. I knew that before I could really get to sleep I'd have to get up and fool around the room and arrange the things on the bureau, and set my slippers in a straight line, and fix my dressing-gown over the chair in a certain way, and turn the electric light off and on four times—or if the switch didn't click loudly all four times, but only three times, then another four times, because of that accursed unlucky number three. Since I'd been in the Nursing Home I hadn't had one of my bad night attacks, but I knew that I *might* have one any time; and here I was, away off by myself, in a strange city. I knew that I could get the night-nurse by ringing. But before she got to me I might be dead. Or worse, I might be "stricken" before I could ring at all. The same old "chains of thought" you see, going round and round in my head, as soon as night came on.

So, while I was reading my notes, knowing that very soon I'd have to get up and begin my foolishness, I dozed off.

I don't know how long I slept. When I opened my eyes I felt that the room had changed somehow. The light over my bed was out. My side of the room was in darkness. But just opposite the foot of my bed, where my eyes could turn easily from any direction, I saw a shaded lamp on a table, and beside the table a woman in just ordinary clothes—a woman knitting. And while I watched she came to the end of a row of stitches, and scratched her nose with the end of her free steel needle. Then I thought I was dreaming for sure. But she heard me stir. She got up and came over to the bed.

"Don't move," she said. "You were sleeping so peacefully. I'll straighten out this pillow." Then, as I looked up at her in a puzzled sort of way, she added, "I'm the night-attendant. I usually sit in the hall downstairs. But it's draughty there. And I thought that perhaps you wouldn't mind if I sat here a while."

What could I say except "Yes?" If I had thought she was a regular night-nurse, sprung on me without my consent, I'd have raised a row. In the first place, I'd have been scared to think that the doctors thought I needed a night-nurse; and secondly, I'd have fussed about the expense, been uneasy until I knew just what she was to get a week or a night. But this way—why, I had no chance to say anything. Besides, when she was fixing up my bed, I saw that she was rather a little woman, but sort of

plump and comfortable looking, with wavy brown hair, and eyes, not blue exactly, like my mother's, but grayish—and anyway—she had been sitting there knitting, and for a moment, as I woke up, I thought (it sounds childish, of course) but I thought that it *was* my mother. She went back to her chair, and I lay curled up in bed watching her. Then, all of a sudden, I remembered that I simply couldn't go to sleep for the night like this. I hadn't gone through any of my usual routine. But so long as she was there in the room, I was blocked. I couldn't do all my usual "stunts" in front of her. I'd have been ashamed to let her or anyone see me at them. She'd have thought I was crazy. Yet I—I couldn't rest easy this way just the same. So I asked her to go and get me a glass of milk. The minute she disappeared, I was out of bed and fixing my dressing-gown on the chair. I had just got it right and was stooping down to arrange my slippers on a straight line, when, as often happened, I thought I had touched them three times while arranging them, and so had to bend down again to touch them both eighteen times. (That infernal number 3 again.) And, straightening up, I saw her standing there in the door watching me. I scrambled into bed with my ears tingling. How much had she seen? How long had she been standing there?

She brought me the milk, and when I had drunk it, tucked me in, in the most matter-of-fact way,

saying never a word until she was back in her far corner again, and had taken up her knitting. Then, said she, scratching herself behind the ear with her steel needle (just like my mother), "Now don't you worry about a single thing. I'm going to be sitting here the whole night through. If you feel sick or want anything, all you've got to do is to call. Or you needn't even do that, for if you move I shall hear you. A man, who has been overworked and overtired, like you, gets as fussy as a child at night-time. Like a scared little boy, who can't sleep without a night-light.—Well, I'm your night-light. Pretend I'm that, and nothing more. The only thing I ask is that you won't blow me out."

I slept until late next morning. No early waking, no blue devils at the usual hour. And, for the first time in months, I'd got to sleep without going through *all* my usual performances and getting all fussed up in the process. I don't know whether the night-attendant is to be here to-night again or not. I'm afraid to ask. But if she isn't—I've almost made up my mind to get a night-nurse.

The other thing that has happened in the past three days is my interest in my new blank-book. I always was crazy about any kind of blank-books. Even nowadays I love a big stationer's shop, where there are all sorts of ledgers, and patent ink-bottles, and filing systems, and pencil-sharpeners. So, when the Doctor had a bundle of blank-books sent up to me, three days ago, I picked out two. One

I'm using to write for him "The Story of My Life," the first chapter, up to my seventh year, being nearly done already. But the other book is to be my private ledger, and I'm going to write in it anything I darn please. Together with the things the Doctor dictates, of course. I didn't realize what fun it was writing just the way you wanted to do, without thinking that somebody else was going to read and criticize it. And this has given me something to occupy my mind. I've got a sort of table that swings over my bed that I can write on easily.

When the third morning came, and still no Doctor, except my usual visit from that cheerful young scientist, Dr. Oldham King, I was getting impatient. Noon came; still no one appeared. Miss Frolich darkened the room for my afternoon nap, and I had been trying to doze for half an hour when the door opened quietly, and the man I was wanting walked in. In the dim light I could just see that he carried two fat books under his arm.

"And now," he began, sitting down by my bed, "let's get at the roots of things. You've got questions to ask, I dare say. Let them wait. Instead, tell me what you know about roots?"

"Roots," I retorted. "Here I've been wanting to see you for days, and you talk about roots."

"Exactly. And if you don't know anything about them, just listen a minute to me. If you've ever lived in the country—as I know you have—

where the drainage system is somewhat primitive, you'll remember the days when the sink in the kitchen suddenly begins to overflow with water backed up from the main drain. And there's no end of trouble. You have to take spades, go down to the end of your vegetable garden, where your house drain empties into the main pipe, and dig the connection free, open your pipe, and push long wires or poles into it, to see if you can find what's wrong. And, unless your women folk in the house have been badly trained housekeepers and have thrown wash-rags and refuse down the kitchen sink, you'll find that what is blocking or breaking your drain is—roots. Willow roots, especially. Why, I've seen masses of tiny little willow roots, as long as your arms and twice as thick, taken out of a drain-pipe. How did they get in there? Did you know that these tiny roots will gradually force their way through a pipe—not an iron one of course—but an ordinary porcelain one? Or, if you've got a brick drain, you'll find that larger roots will push right through the mortar, will even crack the bricks, and smash up the whole thing. Or, if your pipe is iron, and if the roots can't get into it and through it, you'll find oftentimes a big root as thick as your fist running parallel with the pipe all the way, hugging it, getting as close to the outside as it can, since it can't get in. And what's the reason for all this? What sort of an attraction is there in the drain-pipe that makes the root force its way in?

It's not because of the pipe. It's because of what the pipe carries. The roots want water. And where water is, there those roots will go. The willow tree itself may be twenty or thirty feet from your drain; but its roots, even that far off, sense the moisture, sense the water in the distant pipe, and they push their way toward it, through the earth, little by little, until they reach it. And then they bore their way in, to the water. Or if they can't do that, they hug the pipe, getting as close to the water as they can. Nobody thinks much about the roots. The birds that build in the willow branches don't know that, if it weren't for the roots getting at the underground water, there wouldn't be any green leaves for them to nest in. Even the leaves, and the branches themselves, probably feel that the beauty of the tree is due to them. They don't realize that they'd wither or dry up if it were not for the persistence of the unseen roots, if it were not for their innate love of moisture that draws them to water, no matter if it be only the scourings of a kitchen sink in a dirty old drain-pipe. I often think that we ought to turn around that Gospel saying about knowing men by their fruits. 'By their roots ye shall know them' sounds truer to me.—So let me tell you that your roots—the roots of your mind—have somehow been soaking in water that's been poisoned. And that means danger to the whole tree—which has forgotten it had roots at all. I say again, then, let's get at the poisoned

roots. Begin with the day you found out about your high blood-pressure."

I could tell him then, somehow. The room was dim; I couldn't see him clearly, or he me. And besides, hadn't he had trouble with his own blood-pressure? Surely he would understand. So I started from the day when I got the letter from the life-insurance company. And I told him—well, not everything. Not about my wife, or about the way I got more frightened at night. It was a relief to get some of it off my chest.

"I sometimes wish," he said, after I had finished, "that at least half of the blood-pressure machines in the world were smashed. However, in your case, if it hadn't been blood-pressure, it would have been something else. You were riding for a fall. Lucky that it has come now."

Then I asked my questions; told him about the new nurses, and told him that I'd be glad to have the night-attendant spend a few more nights in my room, if she wanted to. He gave me a queer look, and said he'd arrange it, if he could.

"I was talking about roots, a moment ago." He was always jumping from one subject to another. "And I mentioned water-pipes.—By the way, when you were a boy, and a good Methodist, did you ever have to learn any of the Psalms by heart?"

"Not that I can remember," said I. "We sang hymns enough. I remember those, or some of the Moody and Sankey ones."

"I am referring to songs of praise somewhat older than even those two estimable hymnographers.—Well, anyway, in the Psalms of David—in the Bible——"

"Oh, them."

"Yes, just them. There's one that begins, 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks.' As a boy I used to have a sort of mental picture of a deer running away from hunters, getting thirsty, and longing to find a brook somewhere, as he ran. But, last year, I had among my patients a very learned rabbi.—I don't know whether you've ever met that type of Jew. If not, you've missed something. Deep learning combined with great humility, a sort of aloofness from this material world that gives a dignity, a poise—something like what one imagines Moses might have been after his forty days on Mt. Sinai, alone with the Lord God of Israel.—Well, he interpreted that Psalm for me. And he must be right. I want you to get it, because it has a close connection with roots and water-pipes.—You see, in Palestine the cities often had to bring their water from a distance. And apparently they laid down, on the top of the ground, a kind of a stone trench, through which the water ran. A rectangular trough covered on top, but having, here and there, small open places in the cover, between the stones or tiles, so that people could look in to see if the water were flowing, but not large enough to allow the passage of a hand or anything that might seri-

ously interfere with the water itself. These stone troughs were often laid for miles, through dry, uninhabited country. And what the Psalmist thought of was this: A thirsty deer, who has sought everywhere in vain for water, comes suddenly on one of these trenches. He can hear the noise of the flowing water; he can even smell its freshness through one of the openings between the stones on top. But he can't get at the water. Like the willow root, he puts his great head down on top of the stone trough in order to get as close to the water as he can, taking deep breaths and drawing in the coolness of the stream that he can hear and smell, yet cannot taste. The absolute quenching of his thirst is denied him; he may not drink. But he gets as near the water as he can; he gets some coolness, some refreshment, enough to give him strength to walk farther on to the spring, far up the distant hill from which the water comes. 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks.'—Do you get the picture now?—'So panteth my soul after thee, O God.' "

The Doctor's voice had dropped almost to a whisper. In the dim room I could not see his face, and I was rather glad. For I was feeling uncomfortable again. He got up and went over to the window in order to pull up the shades. It was one of his strange ways, that whenever he referred to religion —or I don't mean that exactly—whenever he referred to "his faith," a something that he seemed

to keep hidden, like something valuable and precious that he didn't show to everyone—he'd turn away his face. (Only once in all our weeks together did he ever, in such circumstances, face me directly. And that was at the very end of things. But I shall never forget what I saw then.)

This time, however, as he stood with his hand on the lowered shade, he spoke over his shoulder, half to himself.

"The roots instinctively seek the water," he said. "The deer may come on the stone culvert by chance. But, with men, it seems as if one had to drag them to the water and show it to them first. Even then, somehow, they don't drink. And yet roots, deer, and man are all thirsty. But the man—Oh, sometimes I think that he doesn't know water when he sees it. He tries to quench his thirst with so many other useless things. And the worst of it is that he not only quenches his thirst—he kills it. So that he never seems really to thirst again."

Lifting the window-shade, he let the afternoon sunlight flood the room. And with the light the heaviness—the tone of discouragement—seemed to pass from his voice. He snuggled down into the deep armchair by my bed, and pointed a thin finger at the two books he had brought, lying on the bed beside me.

"I don't expect you to read these," he said. I knew from the way he spoke, and from his position in the chair, that he was going to have a "confer-

ence" with me, so I reached for my pencil and paper. "But you might look through them. You won't understand even the pictures—microscopic sections of brain tissue and other technical adornments of the same kind. I don't pretend to understand the whole thing myself. But glance through this book of Cannon's first. He's professor of physiology at Harvard, a great light. He'll tell you what the physiologists know, thus far, about fear and anger. Then run over the chapter headings in this other book by a great surgeon, Dr. Crile.*—Meanwhile, as a sort of kindergarten introduction, I'll try to tell you something about the mechanism of fear. Only don't take what I say as authoritative. I'm only giving you a little 'spoon-feeding.' And I'm not even sure that my baby food is properly prepared."

He stopped for a minute, reached out his hand to the little pile of books on the table beside my bed, and picked up the Bible he had lent me, which lay on top of the other books.

"I thought," I said, "that you were going to talk about—about something new—I mean scientific. You said——"

He put the Bible down on my table, and then piled on top of it the two new books he had brought.

"Exactly so," he said. "We'll take them in this order."

* For complete titles of these books, see Bibliographical Note on p. 364.

But I was fidgety. Mother never allowed any other book to lie on top of "The Scriptures." So, pretending that I wanted to look at the new books, I took them off the table and put back the Bible where it had been before, on top of the other pile. It made me feel more comfortable. Then I suddenly realized that the Doctor was looking at me. My hands began to shake; I pretended that I was hunting for my pencil.

"It's strange," he began abruptly, "how live things die from the roots up. Not from the branches down. A tree will be dead—not a living root left, not a bit of life-giving sap in it anywhere —and yet its leafless branches will stick up in the air, and take up just as much room in the world as they ever did." Then he laughed. "Oh, you needn't take notes of all that.—I was talking then just to please myself.—When I lift up my first finger like this—you'll know I'm not saying anything worth noting."

(Maybe that was what *he* thought. But, as time went on, I found that very often the things he said, with his fore-finger pointed to the ceiling, were more interesting, more useful to me, than the whole of that day's conference.)

He dropped his extended fore-finger; I took up my pencil.

"There's been such a lot written, during these past years, about the ductless glands, that even laymen must be sick of hearing about them. Your

parotis, your mumps-gland, there below your ear, is a gland *with* a duct—called after a gentleman by the name of Stenson (anatomy's like geography you know; Pike's Peak, or the Straits of Magellan) a duct that ends in your mouth. And the stuff that the gland produces passes through this duct. But the other kind of glands, like the thyroid—here on both sides of your windpipe—have no outlets in ducts. The stuff that they produce is discharged directly into the blood, through the little blood and lymph vessels that surround or penetrate the glandular substance. One kind is like a water tank that has a pipe and a faucet at the bottom, out of which the water flows. The other is like a filter; the water doesn't flow out through a pipe, but seeps through the filtering material at the bottom, into another receptacle. Now, the liquids, or the chemical substances, that these ductless glands produce, are most important regulators of the whole body. And, for the most part, this secretion isn't under the direct control of what you might call the brain. That is, you can't make these glands secrete by willing them to do so, or by intentionally going through some series of acts—like sucking in your lips to make the saliva flow through the duct from the salivary glands into your mouth. But they are controlled by a part of our nervous system that is called by various names—the Vegetative System is one of them, and that is connected intimately with the spinal cord and controls all those complex

activities of the body—heart, lungs, kidneys, and so on—which do not usually reach your consciousness. For all these very delicately balanced activities go on in your body without your *feeling* anything about them at all. The healthy man, as a rule, doesn't know that he *has* a heart or lungs.—This is dull as ditch water I know. But be patient for a minute.—Now, those mental processes that we call emotions—like anger and fear, joy and grief—have some sort of a connection with this part of the nervous system, and through it they work on the ductless glands. Let's get down to a definite example.

"Just on top of your kidneys—called 'renes' in Latin—there are two little ductless glands that are called the suprarenals. They secrete a stuff that the chemists, who isolated it from the tissue of these glands, called adrenalin. Once they had got this adrenalin in a pure state, they could experiment with it on animals and on humans, and could see just what it did. For one thing, it seems to relax the muscles of the tiny air tubes through which we take breath into the lungs, so that you can take deeper breaths, get more oxygen into you, get more of what *you* might call 'pep.' To those unfortunate people who suffer the torments of Hades from asthma—which is a sort of cramp of the air tubes—the hypodermic injection of adrenalin has been a perfect godsend. But adrenalin also sends up the blood-pressure. It keys up the whole body—throws

it, if I may say so, into 'high gear.' It acts also on the thyroid; and suprarenals and thyroid, acting and interacting, and discharging their secretions into the blood, produce in the body certain definite changes. One of the emotions which sets the suprarenals going is fear.

"Let's consider the mechanism of fear, first, in an animal, a rabbit, for example. The rabbit is sitting quietly on his haunches in the spring sun, a long way from his burrow. All of a sudden, just across the clearing, he hears a crackling in the bushes. Perhaps he smells a doggy smell. Long before he sees anything, fear has come upon him—a mechanical reaction, inherited from endless ages of rabbits and developed in himself since he was a little rabbit and heard his mother tell what dogs had done to his furry father. And the moment the fear comes, the suprarenals begin to act. They discharge adrenalin into the rabbit's blood. His lungs expand, he breathes quickly, deeply; his blood-pressure goes up, his heart begins to beat rapidly, all his muscles are tense. His whole rabbit organism has been thrown into 'high gear.'—What for? Why had nature, down through countless rabbit ages, developed these reactions? Why, so that the rabbit might get away, so that he might get a start on the on-coming dog—run back to his burrow, and save his life. For him, all these fear emotions are *protective* reactions. They have some meaning; some sense; some use. He reacts to them. Off he

goes; and the extra strength and tension of muscle and nerve—called up by the adrenalin—gets him to his burrow in safety. Here, he rests—his blood-pressure goes down, his heart stops working overtime, his breathing becomes regular. And, unless he is still afraid of the dog—unless the dog is pawing still at the mouth of his burrow—his suprarenals stop working; and the adrenalin that had been poured into his blood is used up in the process of his flight, and disappears.

"But how different the whole thing becomes when you consider the same process in a human being, a man!

"Take your own case. Of course, a year ago you were run down, overworked, below par, riding for a fall. But you hadn't come a cropper yet. Nevertheless, you were in a condition in which your powers of resistance had been lowered. You had been using up your reserve strength for years, without ever adding to it; and you had, although you did not know it, nearly exhausted that reserve.—Like a man with a bank account, who keeps on drawing checks without adding up the stubs, and then, some fine morning, gets a letter from the bank cashier telling him that his 'account is overdrawn.' Well, while in that condition of mind and body, you got a shock, a fright. Just as much a fright as the rabbit's. Suddenly you seemed to see or to sense something strange—something dangerous—something that meant worse than danger—

coming—coming rapidly toward you. You know what you thought it was.—Death.—What the on-coming dog was to the rabbit, that letter from the life-insurance company was to you.—You were afraid.—And your body began to act just like that rabbit's. Under the emotion of fear, your supra-renals commenced to secrete. Adrenalin was poured into your blood. Your breath began to come short; your heart started to pound. And although your blood-pressure was high enough already, up it went, higher still. The rabbit, remember, was not over-worked; he had no hypertension before he was scared. And he could react to his fear by running away, by physical action, that worked off the adrenalin and saved his life at the same time. But a man like you—why, what was there to run away from? You couldn't run away. That was the worst of it. Perhaps in the future, when men are better trained in such things, when they get a fright like yours they will go to someone whom they know and trust, will tell them what has happened, and say, 'I am simply scared almost to death. Come on out and let's have a round of golf.' But nowadays, most men—just as you did—keep their mouths shut. They can't run away; there's nothing to run away from, nothing material, like the rabbit's pursuing dog. So there they sit and stew in their own fear.

"Next time I see you I want to talk about the results of fear. So I won't touch on that now. But

consider again your own case from one single standpoint. From that of your hypertension, or as you call it, your blood-pressure. You couldn't react to your fear; you had to keep it inside you. The rabbit, when he got to his burrow, stopped being scared. You had no burrow to get to, no place of safety.—Remember that expression—'no place of safety.' And so, of course, you kept on being afraid. Your suprarenals kept on pouring adrenalin into your blood. That kept your blood-pressure up. And this high pressure made you feel dizzy and queer—made you feel more frightened still. Don't you see the vicious circle? The more scared you got, the higher your pressure went; and the higher it went, the more frightened you became.

"Now do you understand what has been happening to you?"

By this time I was so interested that I had almost forgotten to take notes.

"It doesn't seem fair to the man," I said, as the Doctor paused. "If I'd only been a rabbit.—But not being one isn't my fault."

"Who said it was? Things in this world would be easy enough to deal with if they were always clearly 'our own fault.' It's the things that jump out on us from round the corner, the things that fall on us from the sky, without any apparent causal act of our own—these are the things that we can't cope with by ourselves, or of our own strength. Something or Somebody seems to have sent them,

without our wishing it—and Somebody or Something has got to help us get rid of them. And that's where I come in. Or men like me.—Of course, we're only agents of the very lowest sphere of activity. To get permanent results you have to go to headquarters."

He stood up, threw back his thin, bowed shoulders, and patted himself on the chest.

"Here, before you," he went on, half jokingly, but with an undercurrent of earnestness in his voice, "stands one of the least among the fear-hunters. There are lots far better than I am. But I am the one assigned to do for you the hunting that you're too sick to do yourself. I've had some experience. And, during these next weeks, we'll hunt out your fears one by one, we'll follow their tracks through the open country of consciousness, and trace them to the hole in the rocks, where they will try to slip into those deep, unexplored caves that lie, unsuspected, in the subconscious life, under the smiling, sunny, familiar fields and villages of our daily conscious existences. For, in order to accomplish anything, we must find the cave—find the entrance to it first, and then dig or crawl down into it. We may come across some very unpleasant things lying around there on the ground, especially if the Fear-dragon, who inhabits the cave, has been living there for a long while. There will be old bones scattered round, and—and dirt. Usually a good deal of dirt.—Maybe filth is a still better word.—But all

that is what one might call 'inorganic matter.' It is disgusting, but it can't bite us. And it isn't the dragon itself. That's were so many people go wrong. They confuse the dragon's dirty traces with the animal itself. They clean out the cave and go away, leaving the dragon still alive, lying hidden in some dim corner, and chuckling silently to himself because he knows that, as soon as these hunters are gone, he'll have his old home to himself again. —Hunters?—People—careless unthorough people like that—aren't hunters at all. They're merely scavengers. And they get their hands dirty fussing with all the stuff, the filthy stuff that they find in the fear-dragon's cave. Of course, if you kill the dragon, as a good fear-hunter should, you're likely to soil your hands too; but it will be with blood—not with filth—with the life-blood of the dragon.

"So, we are going on a fear-hunt, you and I. You'll get some excitement, I think, and a number of surprises. After you have killed a fear-dragon, and have dragged his body out into the sunlight, you are often astonished—and, in a way, disappointed. The big, slimy, powerful body of the beast, that used to twine round you and hold you powerless to move, shrivels and shrinks, and you find that you are holding in your hands some mean little lizard about a foot long. That's a peculiarity of fear-dragons. Get them out into the sunlight, away from their caves, and you wonder what there ever could have been in that wretched, squashed

snake to frighten you so. But it *did* frighten you; in its cave, it *was* powerful, and evil, and poisonous. And one reason was because your roots (now you know why I talked so much about them a while ago) reached down from the sunny field above the cave—the field where the tree of your life grew—reached down through the rock, missing somehow the little brook that flowed nearby, and pushed straight into the dragon's cave, where they festered and rotted in the dragon's filth, and where the dragon himself could gnaw them to the quick. A fear-dragon lives and thrives on roots. But take him away from that nourishment—out into the sunlight, and he shrivels up. Only, remember, he doesn't begin to shrivel until he's dead. You've got to fight him and kill him first.

"Now, suppose you say a word or two. When you and I have discovered the cave, have cleaned it out, have traced its inhabitant to the dimmest corner, killing him and dragging him out into the open—then, what next? What shall you do with the cave? For it's yours. You're responsible for it."

I thought I knew the answer to that.

"That's easy," said I. "I'll blow it up with dynamite and destroy it."

The Doctor shook his head.

"How delightful that would be," he said. "But it can't be done. The cave is part of your inheritance—part of the 'lot that has fallen to you in a fair ground.' You might *think* you had

destroyed it—or pretend you had—but it would be there all the same. If not as a cave, then perhaps as something more dangerous still."

"Then I'll fill it up with earth and rocks, so that there will be only solid ground under my feet."

"Some people are fairly successful in filling in—in making solid ground out of caves. But there's always the danger of forgetting about it now that it's filled up; and of some other dragon boring in, uncovering the old entrance, and making himself at home there, before you know what is happening. —No, there's only one safe way of dealing with fear-caves. The knights-errant, in the old tales, knew the secret. When one of them had killed a 'noisesome worme' and when the people of the nearby village, whose children had been devoured by the dragon for so many years, came clustering around his stirrups, he told them to burn up the dragon's body, to clean out the cave, and then to send for the village priest. Then he made the priest build a little altar in one corner of the cave—and say Mass there. And he dedicated the cave to one of the saints.

"That's what you want to do with your cave. Dedicate it. Not to the slayer of the dragon. Least of all—as so many do—to the dragon himself. But go farther back than the dragon. He may have lived in that cave a long, long time. But, after all, he was only a 'transient,' a chance resident. —Go back beyond him, I say, to the original Maker

of the cave who created it and who never intended it as a dwelling-place for dragons.—Dedicate it to Him.—Then you can go there safely any day—back to the scene of your past fears and fightings; you can say your prayers there, too, if you want to, for it will be a place of peace."

"You mean," I said, embarrassed a little again, although I was growing somewhat accustomed to the Doctor's matter-of-fact way of talking about "religion"—"dedicate the cave—to—to——"

"The Hebrews," interposed the Doctor, "feared to pronounce the sacred name of the Lord God of Israel. But you are, I take it, not a Jew. Besides, I've noticed that you pay at least external reverence to the Law and the Prophets. Incidentally, I suppose, to the Gospels also. Twice today, while talking to you, I've altered the position of the books by your bed. And every time that I've slipped some other book on top of that black leather-covered Bible, you've sneaked out a hand when you thought I wasn't looking, and put the Bible back on top of the pile. And why? Because you feel uneasy to see what you call 'The Scriptures' lying beneath a 'worldly book.' As if it 'brought bad luck.' There's nothing back of that act of yours, which *looks* like reverence but isn't—nothing but a fear-thought. A miserably selfish one too. You're afraid of bringing bad luck, not on me or on the world in general, but on yourself. Even the few remnants of religious feeling that are left in your mind are infected

by fear.—I'm not blaming you. Please, for good and all, put any idea of praise or blame on my part out of your head entirely.—We don't blame a man who has slipped on a banana skin and broken his leg. We might think that he could have avoided the skin, dropped by some careless moron. But we realize that he may be very short-sighted, and may have left his eye-glasses at home, on that fatal day. You see, there are too many causes and effects—primary, secondary, up to the thousandthary—all interacting in these lives of ours, to make it possible or fair to *blame* anyone.—I was with a condemned man in prison this morning. In two weeks' time he's to be hanged for a brutal murder, and I believe that, as our laws stand, he ought to die. But I don't blame him.—I don't know.—I can't know all the antecedent causes of heredity—all the interacting forces of environment, and especially all the apparent chances of the crime itself—the chances that brought together, at the same tragic moment, weapon and enemy and anger and opportunity. So I don't blame; and that leaves room in my mind for pity. Not wishy-washy emotional pity; but the feeling you have when you see something that might have been useful and strong and admirable turned somehow into such a hideous mess, that the only thing to do, at the present stage of our civilization, is to—to take it away and bury it.

"I wish you'd make a note of this. If you get the

idea that I am criticizing you—sitting in judgment on you, on your thoughts and actions—that will simply paralyze my efforts. I shan't be able to help you at all.

"So, when I speak of your attitude toward the leather-bound book there by your bed, I'm only trying to make you see what lies behind it. I gather, from what you've already said, or rather from what you haven't said, that you've lost your hold on the religious belief of your boyhood. The fundamental things—or what your minister would probably have considered the fundamental things—are all gone, washed away by the flow and re-flow of a routine life, year in, year out. Yet your attitude—I say attitude advisedly—toward what you were taught to call 'The Book' remains. What has preserved this, when all the other things have perished?—Your fear of bringing 'bad luck' on yourself.—Not much of a motive. Oh, I know that plenty of people have managed to preserve their religious beliefs from exactly the same motive—from fear of bringing 'bad luck' on themselves at the Day of Judgment, or in a place they call Hell. But I don't think much of that type of believer.

"That's enough for to-day," he said. "Keep on with your regular routine. The next time I come I want to begin working at your life from both ends at once. First, I want to start getting at all the worries and anxieties and fears that have been

poisoning you during the past months. And secondly, we'll start with the notes that you've made of the first seven years of your life, and I shall want you to describe those early days of yours to me so clearly and in such detail that I can see for myself the house you lived in, the room you slept in, the children you played with, the brothers and sisters, the father—and, especially, the mother. So, by working at your life from both ends, we'll finally come to a meeting-place in the middle—a meeting-place of understanding. Be patient.—Remember that your own will is supposed to be hanging up, with your hat, in the hall downstairs. —Eat and sleep and read and write. I see from your chart that you've put on five pounds already. —I'll see you shortly.—But because I don't see you, don't think that you are out of my mind. I'm in touch with you really all the time. And don't imagine that I'm a doctor with a hobby, a professional hobby, a hobby about fear.—Here, read this." He tossed me a folded paper, something smaller than the *Saturday Evening Post*. "That," he said, as he went toward the door, "is the only paper to which I subscribe and in which I read—much. The London *Spectator*. You've probably never heard of it. But look on page sixty-three, and read the passage I've marked, the paragraph that begins: 'The ramifications of the evil of fear are huge——' "

"One minute, Doc," I interposed. "Have I got to wait three days before I see you again?—Sup-

pose I felt bad—really sick, all of a sudden. Of course, Dr. Oldham King's all right. But——"

"Spare me that," the Doctor said, turning toward me, as he opened the door. "Let me be at least one thing in your life with which you have no associations of fear. You're *afraid* that you may need me, and *afraid* that I may not come.—Let's settle this once for all.—If you need me—really need me—Miss Frolich will have me here at your bedside in half an hour, maybe in less. Only, you yourself must be the judge of that need. If that need be real, there is nothing that I will not gladly sacrifice in order to satisfy it—my rest, my relaxation, my health, even my other patients, or at least some of them. But don't ask me to break my rest, to lose my few hours of relaxation, and to neglect other people just because you feel that you'd be a little less uncomfortable if you could talk to me. —I've only got just so much strength and power to give. Don't make me waste any of it on a need that isn't real.—But you can write me, if you have any important questions. Give your notes to Miss Frolich. She'll see that I get them, for I'm here at the Nursing Home, once every day.—Sometimes more than once. Just now I've got my hands full.—Almost more than I can manage.—There's one patient here—just under you, downstairs—who— Perhaps I'll tell you about the case sometime. I've got a big fight on—and I'm not so sure that I can win."

And that was the first time that I heard about the woman from Kansas City—the woman and her white-faced daughter, whom I had seen so often in the Chief's waiting-room.

EXTRACT FROM THE RECORDS OF THE NURSING HOME.

Note by the Visiting Psychiatrist.

Mr. Edwards shows some improvement. Keep on Miss Nelson as night-attendant. The charge for her services as night-nurse must not go on patient's weekly bill just yet. He will pay it when he leaves the home, I think. If he makes any difficulty, I will be responsible. There will be trouble about his teeth. But do not have the extractions performed until I see him again. Mrs. Fergusson's case disturbs me. The depression is deepening. She denies suicidal thoughts. But she is not to be left alone, day or night, even for a moment.

CHAPTER VIII

TEETH AND DISCOURAGEMENT

THIS is my tenth day here. And a nice jolt I got this morning with my breakfast. Yesterday Miss Frolich took me in a taxi to have another dental examination. The same old X-ray stuff at the Chief's main office, done by that quiet tall girl with reddish hair. (Not the one who ushers the patients into the Chief's room, but the one who runs the X-ray machine.) Then I waited for the pictures and took them with me to the dentist who had seen me once before. And this morning, with my breakfast, in walks Dr. Oldham King—an unusual time for him—and tells me that I've got to—got to have —*all* my teeth out! He talked a lot about "too much bridge-work" and the danger from dead roots. It seems that, after their first examination, they changed their minds; or they read the X-ray pictures differently; or perhaps they intended to take them all out from the beginning, and didn't want to tell me for fear I'd back out and go home.

Well (I'll write it down here so that there shan't be any mistake about it) I AM NOT GOING TO WEAR FALSE TEETH! My dentist at home has always been

able to patch things up; I've got what you might perhaps call "false teeth" in the front of my upper jaw, but they're on a bridge; they're cemented into my side-teeth, and I—I don't have to take them out and put them in a glass of water at night. As for the lower jaw, it's true that I have some teeth there that come out—on a gold wire they are—three on the right and four on the left. But you'd never know I had them. Even my wife doesn't know it. And when I smile nothing shows but what's my own—mostly. Why, I paid hundreds of dollars for that bridge-work. And they want to tear it all out and "clean up my mouth"—"make it hygienic"—and give me a red-rubber plate that will drop down when I talk, and that will show an expanse of red-rubber gum when I smile. No, sir. Not for me.

I let Dr. Oldham King talk and talk. He says that the teeth ought to come out now, that in a year or less they will be positively dangerous, that I am absorbing pus into my blood all the time. And so on and so on.

I don't believe it. And I had a good knock-down argument, one that he couldn't answer. Said I:

"How about our grandfathers and great-grandfathers? They had dead teeth, didn't they? They had pus-pockets at the roots, didn't they? They absorbed pus into their blood. And they lived—mine did anyway—to be over seventy, and never had an ache or a pain, didn't they?—I mean they

didn't have them—aches and pains.—All this modern stuff about pulling out your teeth is nonsense. It may be good for some old people whose teeth are really rotten. But making everybody do it—why, it's like this other new idea of having your gall-bladder out (in the nineties, it was your appendix). All just a fad of the doctors. If it isn't something worse—an understanding between your doctors and the dentists to make a new market for false teeth."

Dr. Oldham King got mad and left me. Because he couldn't answer my argument. And I'll bet that when my Fear-Hunter comes to see me he'll think just as I do. How would he like to have to wear crockery uppers at his age? And with his moustache always cut so short that he shows his teeth whenever he smiles. Why, he's a good-looking fellow; he wouldn't stand for it a minute. No, sir.

(*Later. Same afternoon.*)

My Fear-Hunter has just gone. This was his third visit. I've had a good deal of a shock. And I don't just exactly know where I stand. I'll write down, from my notes, what happened.

After my argument with Oldham King, I had gone through my morning's routine, still more or less fussed. But after my luncheon I laid down to doze, and got a little quieter. It had been four days since I'd seen my other doctor, but I was fairly well satisfied. The night-attendant had got into the habit of coming to my room at eight, when she went

on duty, and of sitting there by a screened lamp all night. I had found out that I *could* get to sleep without going through *all* my old routine, although I hadn't given it all up, by any manner of means. I had some queer ways still—ways of lying in bed, or of arranging my watch under the pillow, or even of touching the glass of water and the little clock by my bedside. (You had to touch them both together with outspread fingers, or else it didn't count and you had to do it all over again, for if you'd touched unevenly and hit the glass twice and the clock once, that would make the number 3, and that was a sure bad-luck bringer; the mere thought of it made me uncomfortable, and the only thing that could relieve me was to touch both things eighteen times. For 18 was lucky. Sounds crazy, I know. But I wasn't crazy. And that is exactly what I did. And not the worst that I did by any manner of means.) But the greater part of my old routine was impossible because I wasn't alone. I couldn't go through with it with that kind little lady sitting there knitting. Besides, after the first few nights, I sort of broke the hold these things had had on me; I had proved to myself, by actual experience, that I *could* leave them out, and yet sleep through the night in safety.

Then, Miss Frolich was a treasure. If my Fear-Hunter had made any references to books or things that I didn't understand, she and I used to look them up together. And she'd send down to the

Public Library to get books or to locate references for me. Then she'd read aloud to me from the books. That's how we read Tennyson's "In Memoriam"—dull, ladylike poem, I call it, sort of sweetish. But she found some other poems in the same book that I liked a lot better. Why, my boy Tom, when he came to see me for the first time, yesterday, nearly choked himself when I quoted at him:

> Though much be taken from us, much
> remains, and though
> We are not what we were——

specially when, under my breath, I muttered, "Tennyson." Only, confound it, I'd forgotten the title of the piece. Some man's name it was.

So, having made up my mind, and noted same, that I *would* not wear false teeth, I was feeling fairly satisfied with my progress and was dozing off, as I've said, after lunch, when in the dead quiet of the summer afternoon I heard the floor squeak in the passage outside of my room. I sat up. For it was, I thought, my Fear-Hunter. His visit was about due—a day overdue in fact. There was someone in the hall outside. Of that I felt sure. Yet the door did not open. I had heard no retreating footsteps. And my room was at the end of a corridor. There was no other into which the person could have turned. He or she must be standing outside my door.

Now, of all the things in this world that I hate the most, the worst-hated of all is being spied on. To feel that somebody is trying to watch me on the sly —trying to put something over on me—that gets my goat, every time.—Without thinking what I was doing or why, I got out of bed and tiptoed to the door. Very gently I turned the knob, so that the person on the other side should suspect nothing; and then, with a sudden tug, I threw the door wide open.

For what seemed an age I stood there staring. My own room was in semi-darkness, for the shades were down, and there wasn't much light in the corridor either. But I could see enough to recognize the man who was leaning up against the side wall, his shoulders all hunched up and his face hidden in his two hands. He didn't look much like a Fear-Hunter then. He looked tired—discouraged—perhaps afraid. I thought he was sick.

He looked up at once, and saw me standing in the doorway. "No," he said, shaking his head. "I'm all right. Go back to bed. I'm coming in to you immediately."

By the time I had climbed back into bed he was in the room, pulling up the blinds. And, as the light fell on his face, I saw that he looked very tired.

"Wrestling," he said, in his queer way, over his shoulder, "with the angel.—And Jacob's strength isn't what it used to be."

I felt a little dazed. As if I'd caught sight of

something that I had no business to see; as if I'd suddenly found myself in church, in the middle of a prayer, with my hat on. But the Doctor seemed to understand. He came and sat down on the edge of my bed, something he had never done before. Then, with his hands clasped between his knees, and looking down at the floor, instead of at me, he said:

"I'm listening. Your mental atmosphere, so far as I can sense it, is charged with envy, hatred, and malice. And I take it you have been saving it up for me.—Here I am."

Of course, under those circumstances it wasn't easy for me to work myself up into the rebellious rage in which I had written the first part of this chapter, only a few hours before. But I did the best I could, looking sideways at the even white line of the Doctor's teeth that showed clearly beneath his clipped moustache, and thinking of what I'd look like, a toothless old man, able to lick the tip of my nose with my lower lip when my false teeth were out (resting in the soap-dish, full of slimy water) or, when they were in, sucking and mumbling to keep them in place. It wasn't easy, working myself up again, but I did it, although I got no encouragement from the Doctor, who sat on my bed like a bump on a log, without opening his mouth.

"How would you like it yourself?" I said finally, making what we call in salesmanship the "direct personal appeal." "You're rather careful, I notice,

of your appearance. Shave every day. That I know. And probably brush your teeth twice.—How would you like to let your teeth soak in a glass dish instead of brushing them?"

For a moment he didn't say anything. Then he threw out his hands and shrugged his shoulders, with a kind of resigned air.

"I told you once," he said, "that to any real need of yours—or of any of my patients—I shouldn't hesitate to sacrifice my personal comfort, my amusements, my hours of rest. But in your case, it seems as if I were called upon to sacrifice my pride also.—I sacrificed it once, the first time I visited you here, when you asked me about this button that I wear in the lapel of my coat. And now I've got to do it again. However, it's good spiritual discipline, I suppose. Only to-day it's doubly hard, for I'm not in a hairshirt attitude of mind." Then he reached out his hand. "May I have a drink from your carafe of water?—Thanks.—Now, if you'll just turn your head away for a moment."

I did as he told me, rather puzzled.

"And now," I heard him say, "look here."

As I turned around, my nose almost came into contact with his outstretched fingers. Directly under my eyes he was holding out his extended palm, and in the center of it lay——

Well, you can guess what it was. I stared at the even white rows, set in the flesh-colored plate. And then I turned away my head, of my own accord this

time. I had had a shock. I didn't want to look him in the face.

"Oh, play the game fairly," he said. "I want you to look at me. See for yourself that my face isn't deformed. Of course, if you'd like to see me do it, I *can* fold my lower jaw over my nose, like one of those old collapsible opera hats.—Now, I'll put them back again. See how perfectly they fit.—The trouble with you, and with others in your situation, is that you are thinking in terms of the crockery sets of your grandfathers. Technical dentistry has made as great progress, in the last twenty years, as surgery has. If you had to have your appendix out, you wouldn't refuse to have it done because, fifty years ago, a surgeon operated on your great uncle for 'inflammation of the bowels,' and killed him.—While, as for the extractions themselves—why, my esteemed colleague, Dr. LeNoir, will remove all those broken molars, will cut down, with a knife, to the jaw-bone" (I shivered—I can't stand pain; never could), "and—you'll think he's just tickling the roof of your mouth. Besides, look here." He slipped out the upper plate again, and pointed to the inner surface of the roof, which was stained a deep black. "That," he went on, "is the discoloration caused by smoking. You're a heavy smoker—or you were once. You may be one again soon. Now, if you don't have a plate, all the nicotine-laden smoke that has discolored this plate will strike the skin in the roof of your mouth. If it does this," he pointed

again to the black discoloration, "to the plate, what might it not do to you? The plate is a protection."

I nodded. I was beginning to feel differently about it. One of my pet fears had always been the idea that a man who smokes a lot gets a cancer of the throat or the tongue. But if I had a plate.—However, I wasn't going to give in too easily.

"All the same," I protested, "I don't see why I need to go to all this trouble and expense—just now. Later, perhaps——"

The doctor cut me short.

"I'm not going to argue with you," he said, in his sharp snappy tone that shuts up your words in your throat. "At the cost of some personal humiliation, I've given you all the argument I'm going to give. But I may say this.—After I'd had my bridge-work all out, and my mouth cleaned up, my hypertension, my blood-pressure, went down ten points."

"And what—what was it before," I ventured eagerly, "before you got your mouth—cleaned up?"

"I might say, 'none of your business.' And, on the whole, I think I will say it.—The only point of interest is what my blood-pressure is now. High enough to make me determined never to think of it; low enough to keep me alive."

My mind had started off at a new angle.

"What luck I've had!" I burst out. "And what a remarkable coincidence! I don't suppose it could happen once in ten million times. I mean, that I've

had high blood-pressure and abscessed teeth, and that I've been lucky enough to find a doctor like you, who's had just the same things himself."

The Doctor gave a sort of scornful grunt. It made me feel the way I used to when I was a young ambitious salesman and had supposed that I had put over a convincing "line of talk" to some important customer, who had listened, as I thought, with interest—and then had turned back to his desk and pushed the button for his secretary, to show me out.

"Don't flatter yourself," he said. "There is nothing remarkable about the matter at all. You are a very common modern type. So am I. Both men who live in high gear—hurriers, rushers—who keep their blood vessels under constant tension, and whose teeth decay early, probably because their digestion is more or less ruined by the type of life they lead.—No, no. There is nothing unusual about your case." Somehow I felt a little disappointed. I thought—I still think—that my case was a very unusual, a very interesting one. "We see men like you—blood-pressure phobias—by the score."

"Then," I put in, getting more disappointed every minute, "then you're not interested—in my case.—Somehow, I—I thought you were."

He gave me one of those twisted smiles of his.

"Not in your *case,*" he said. "For, as I've told you, it is nothing unusual.—But in you yourself."

Now this pleased me. I'd always felt that, somehow, I was different from other men of my age. Not

that I'd ever said so to anyone of course. But I wasn't pleased for very long.

"Don't look so self-conscious," the Doctor went on. "You're bridling like a girl at her first party when her 'best young man' tells her how 'stunning' she looks. I am interested in you because you happen to have a son who admires you, who is proud of you, and who isn't ashamed to say so.—And that, in these days of the 'unspanked younger generation,' is something unusual enough to challenge interest."

My first feeling of pleasure disappeared; but somehow I did not mind its going, for in its place there came a sort of warm, choking sensation in my throat, that made my voice a little husky. So he knew Tom.

"Yes, I know him," he went on, answering my unspoken question. "I see him occasionally. He is, so far as I can judge, the most important reason you have for getting well.—But I mustn't waste any more time.—Get your pencil, and let me begin my conference on the results of fear."

As he moved from my bed to his favorite deep chair, the light from the window fell full on his face, and I saw how white and drawn it looked. He moved like a man tired out.

"Why not cut out your discourse to-day?" I asked. "You look done-up." Then a perfect wave of anxiety came over me—a fear that he might get sick and be unable to take care of me any more.

Where should I be then? After coming all this way and spending all this money? So, in a rush, I added, when he made no answer, "You aren't going to give out, are you?—I'm—I'm depending on you, you know. Couldn't you—couldn't you cut out some of your other patients? I'd be willing to—to——"

I didn't dare quite say that I'd be willing to pay him double for his visits. As it was, I stopped because I feared that I'd gone too far, that he might snap at me and get mad. But to my surprise he scarcely seemed to have heard what I said.

"My other patients," he began slowly. "What do you know about them?—How do you know that they don't need me—or rather not me, but the help that I can give—need it much more than you do?" Then, abruptly, he burst out, clasping his hands between his knees and hunching up his shoulders in a gesture of tense discouragement: "I'm walking through Hell with some of them. And I'm the only companion they've got.—At least the only one that they can see. And yet you—you who sleep quietly most of the night, you who can eat, can put your thoughts into speech—you who can think—think logically, who know that you are you—why, you sit here and complain and whimper because you're to lose a few old poisoned teeth, because you're afraid of having your friends at home know that the teeth you chew with did not grow in your own jaw. Good Lord, man, what do YOU know about real suffering —about real mental torment?" He threw his arms

wide in a despairing kind of a gesture. "The ordinary man to-day," he went on, "with all his boasted civilization, has about the same attitude toward mental illness as the men of the Middle Ages. In fact, he's worse off than they ever were. He has lost their belief in demoniacal possession, in the idea that a man insane is a man possessed. That belief, at least, made mental illness and suffering a real thing.—But nowadays, most people think one of two things—both foolish, both false. Either they feel that what they call 'insanity' is something disgraceful, something to be ashamed of, to be hidden —a sort of family skeleton. Or else, they think that it is 'all imagination.' To them, a man or woman mentally ill could be well enough if they really wanted to be. As if you could get rid of tuberculosis or cancer by *wanting* not to have them, by 'being sensible' and by 'putting all those foolish ideas out of your mind.' For mental disease is as real as bodily sickness.—How little such people know about mental agony!"

I had never seen him so wrought up. He began to pace the room restlessly. But I noticed that he walked very softly, on the tips of his toes.

"I knew a famous surgeon once," he went on. "We were together in Vienna for a year. He used, in those days, to make fun of us psychiatrists. Our patients, most of them, he used to say, were all '*malades imaginaires.*' The only real pain was physical pain. He recognized that; he saw it every day

in his surgical wards; he respected it; he did his very best to alleviate it. 'It makes me furious,' he often said, 'when there is so much unavoidable *real* pain in the world, to see neurotic people add to it by imagining that they are suffering.'—Well, our lives drifted apart. I did not see him for fifteen years, although I heard of his brilliant career in a great city of the Pacific Coast. Then I met him in our new mental clinic at the hospital here. He was recovering from an acute depression. He took me aside one day and tried to talk. Even then, thinking, concentration, was difficult for him, and he cried very easily. 'I know now,' he said; 'I know now what real suffering is.' And he did, poor boy, he did.—Oh, he's well now, better than ever—more brilliant, more successful. But—he is a wiser man."

He stopped in his quiet pacing to and fro, and pointed downward with his finger, in the direction of the room beneath mine.

"Down there," he went on, his voice falling to a whisper, as if he feared some unseen listener, "down there—is—Hell. As I walk here, across this floor, I feel almost as if I were walking on the thin crust of a fiery pit of torment, as if my foot might suddenly break through and I fall into the midst of it.—And yet I—I have just come from it—and I must go back to it soon again."

I began to understand a little.

"So that's why you look so done-up," I interposed.

"That's why I saw you—saw you out there—in the hall——"

He nodded. For almost five minutes he did not speak. And I was afraid to say anything myself. So I lay back in bed, watching him. He seemed to be puzzled about something. Finally he came to some decision. For he leaned over the foot of my bed and took away my pencil and note-paper.

"I'm going to do a rather unprofessional thing," he began, speaking rapidly and in a low voice. "I'm going to talk to one patient about the case of another patient. Only promise me that this shan't affect your confidence in me, that you won't imagine that I shall ever discuss your case without your knowledge and permission in the presence of unauthorized persons.—I must risk some loss of your confidence, I suppose.—For it seems more important that you, who have been on the border-lines of what we call a depressive psychosis—a real mental illness—should understand something of what mental illness and suffering really is.

"In the room below us is lying a woman of some sixty-five years. She came here from the West, with her devoted daughter."

"From Kansas City?" I put in. "I know the two women, I guess. I used to meet them at the main office. And there was a lawyer from Florida too."

"Not my patient," interposed the Doctor. "But he's in this house. On the lower floor, back.—You may hear something of him, too, before you

leave.—But if you know this Mrs. Fergusson—you must have heard her name at the office—why I needn't describe her, not physically."

"A tall, thin, haughty-looking woman," I answered. "She'd never speak when I said 'Good morning,' and she'd pull her skirts close to her, as if she were afraid they might touch me and get dirty. She seemed to think a whole lot of herself.—And the daughter was the whitest-faced, scaredest dried-up little thing I've ever seen. All along I thought that she, not her mother, was the patient."

"Walking through Hell is scary, white-faced work," the Doctor went on. "She's the only child —an attractive young girl once, I imagine, who might have married and lived a happy life of her own. But her sense of duty, as she calls it, made her renounce all this, in order to remain with her parents. She quoted the 'only Commandment with promise' at me.—I could have pointed out that the Commandment says, 'Honor thy father and thy mother'; it doesn't say give up your life to them, sacrifice your hope of husband, home and children to them, empty your whole individuality into theirs, until you ourself are nothing but the walking shell of a personality. If all daughters interpreted the Commandment this way, the human race would soon die out.—But there's a whole class of unmarried women like that.—I call them 'Iphigenias.'—Look her up.—She was sacrificed to her father's ambition —to make him 'happy and comfortable,' so that he

could 'go on with his job,' go down to the office, and capture Troy and come back home comfortably again. But the daughter isn't the patient in this room below yours, although, poor child, she'd love to be there at her mother's side. But the mother won't have her. The sight of this daughter, who has given her whole life for her, terrifies her; she thinks the daughter is going to poison her.—Thinks, did I say?—Why, she knows it. Is as sure of it as she is sure of her own existence. Then she has a fear of contamination. It began way back in her life with some inadequate ideas about infection and bacteria. She began by washing her hands in disinfectants twice a day; then before she set the table for any meal; then before she touched any of the dishes, any knife or fork. She'd wash her hands, and then feel perhaps she hadn't washed them properly, and would wash them all over again."

"I know something about that myself," I interposed. "Only with me it wasn't hand-washing; it was locking the front door at night."

"Then you realize the power of an obsession like that. How completely it dominates you. And the sense of uneasiness and fear that possesses you until the act is properly performed. You can banish the uneasiness at once by going through with the action, and that seems, at first, the easiest way. Only the uneasiness becomes more and more frequent, and finally you are washing and disinfecting your hands every hour.

"Well, in Mrs. Fergusson's case, the idea of physical contamination was soon transferred to the sphere of spiritual contamination, to sin, and—from sin to damnation.

"I shan't tell you all her personal history. She comes of Scotch Presbyterian stock, and grew up in a very repressed domestic atmosphere. She was the youngest girl in a large family—the most unattractive but the most capable daughter, and she seemed destined by fate to remain at home, unmarried, in order to 'take care of her parents.' As a matter of fact there wasn't much for her to do at home, for her mother was a dominant, suspicious personality, who did not intend that there should be 'two mistresses' in the house, and who did all the housekeeping there was to be done herself. The family was well-to-do. And the only outlet the girl had was her religious activities. Presbyterian activities—in Sunday school and Bible class and missionary meeting. She was thirty-five—an accepted spinster—when she went to a missionary meeting and heard a middle-aged missionary, just returned from Mexico, talk about his work of converting to Presbyterianism the poor, ignorant Mexican Roman Catholics. Just how the contacts were made, I don't know. I suppose that her father, who held some office in the church, asked the missionary to Sunday dinner. Anyway, a few weeks after, to the maddened surprise of her family, she announced that she was going to marry the Rev. Mr. Fergusson, and

was going to Mexico with him. She did it. In the face of a hundred obstacles, before which she would have been powerless a few months before. For the thing that we call 'love' had come into her life. And, for her, the desert blossomed like the rose. As long as her husband lived, it never ceased to blossom. Her parents, who felt that she had been 'selfish and obstinate' in leaving her 'home duties,' refused her all financial assistance. But for years she faced bravely the privations of a missionary's life in a small Mexican town, cooked all the meals, did her own washing, and—when her labor pains came upon her—shut herself up with an old Indian woman, a 'convert,' and bore her child without medical help or care. You can imagine the pittance that these three people had to live on; you may not perhaps appreciate the discouragements of trying to convert Mexican Indians to the Westminster Confession, but *I* can; and she endured the trials of her daily life without a murmur. For apparently in those days her religion was a tremendously vivid thing. It carried her over all her difficulties. Her husband, from what I have been able to discover from a Presbyterian friend of mine, was a very unusual man—an austere, hard, rugged type, but a man of intense personal faith, a man who had what the saints of the Middle Ages used to call the 'habit of the presence of God'—So, you see, his faith was the powerhouse that kept her own faith burning, and she loved him so devotedly (although in their strange

repressed way, the word 'love' as applied to their own relationship was never mentioned) that her religious faith and her love or devotion to him became interdependent, or at least mutually interacting.

"Then, some three years ago, the husband died.

"The daughter thinks that her mother 'gave way too much to her grief.' Shut herself up too much. The truth is, I imagine, that by shutting herself off from contact with the world she felt that she was in closer contact with him. And without the sense of his presence and his faith, she simply couldn't live.

"Well, there's no use going into the details of the onset of her depression. The horror of the whole thing lies in the woman's present mental condition compared with the mental habits of her long, self-sacrificing, believing life. Just how her present lines of obsessive thought have developed, I don't dare to say. It may be that the form of belief in which she has lived lays too much stress on the 'election and predestination to glory' of certain souls in contrast to others predestined to eternal loss; that the idea of God's omniscience and of His justice are overemphasized, so that the infinite mercy, and the love—the love of a human heart that once beat and loved and suffered on this earth of ours—are lost sight of. There must be some sort of self-satisfaction—just a touch of spiritual pride in those who feel themselves 'predestined to salvation.' And

where there is pride—of any kind—there is a door left open for—well, for the powers of darkness. At any rate, this deeply religious woman now believes —or, as I said before—she *knows* that she is damned —lost eternally. Her mind is overclouded with a sense of having committed, somehow, somewhere, some 'unpardonable sin'—the sin against the Holy Ghost. God has forsaken her. Sometimes she tries to pray. But her mind won't work that way any longer. Her idea of prayer is repeating more or less formal expressions; and she can't concentrate enough now to put these expressions together. She can't even say the Lord's Prayer. At other times she seems to take a sort of unholy joy in her damnation. All the coarse, evil words that she ever heard by chance in childhood, and that she repressed with an emotion of horror, come to the surface of her mind now. It is terrible to listen to. And if you remonstrate with her, she laughs (and it's not her *own* laugh, so her daughter says) and insists that it makes no difference now what she does or says, as she is damned irrevocably anyway. But the worst is yet to come.—About her husband.—She has damned herself—she can bear that—but she fears that she has somehow damned him too. That she loved him too much—in too earthly a manner. That she let him go wrong—somehow, somewhere. And that, when she dies, he will meet her in Hell, and blame her—blame her, who loved him more than she loved her God—for bringing him there. For all eternity

he will look at her, and his eyes will always say, 'I should not be here, suffering eternal loss, if it had not been for you—you—my helpmeet—my wife.' "

I'm not a man that's easily stirred up. But the way the Doctor spoke—the way he described it all —made my flesh creep. I don't believe in Hell myself.—But I knew then what he had meant when he spoke of having been walking through Hell himself, these last few days. However, I didn't say anything; I saw that he hadn't finished his story yet.

"I keep asking myself," he went on, "why this woman, who apparently has led such a holy, self-sacrificing life, should be tormented in such a damnable way as this. Stretching her out on the rack, or sticking burning pine-splinters under her finger-nails, would be mere child's play compared to the agonies she now endures. The thumb-screws, the rack, all tortures like that, are something *outside* of you—they come from an enemy that you can see and recognize; but this woman's torment comes from *inside*—from within herself. She has become her own tormentor—a more persistent, more heartless tormentor than any external human agent could ever be.—And I keep asking myself why. And there is no answer.—Now you know why I may seem unsympathetic about your own troubles. I don't want to be unsympathetic. For I know that your troubles are real enough. But just measure them alongside of what's going on in the room just below

this, and you'll get a better sense of relative values, and also more patience."

"But," I interrupted, for I had forgotten all about myself, and I pointed downward to the room below; "but—is she—is she going to die?"

"Not if I can help it," the Doctor answered, and I saw him throw back his shoulders and brace himself. "This particular type of depression usually gets well. The cloud lifts sooner or later, and leaves the mind as unimpaired as it was when the illness began. All that the patient has to do is to live up to his or her name and *be* patient. The end of the depression is sure to come; every minute you live you're getting nearer to the end of it.—But you can't make a depressed woman or man believe that. They *know* that they will never get well. And just there lies the only danger.—Imminent always.—It haunts me.—But let's not speak of that now.—My present job, you see, with a case like this, is to give the patient something to hang on to—something to hold them in life until the cloud lifts and they are themselves again.—That's a very pregnant expression—'themselves again.' For I feel, I tell you, in a case like the one downstairs, that I am dealing *not* with Mrs. Fergusson, but with some sort of malignant force, some power that has invaded her real personality. Where that force comes from, I don't know. Call it a subconscious personality, if you like, coming from her own lower mental levels. Or, if you prefer, call it some power from outside her—

something malignant that has got inside her personality, and that submerges it, at least partially. Now and again the real person—the devoted wife, the loving mother, the devout Christian—comes to the surface. The distorting veil, cast by the presence of the evil thing, whatever it may be, thins out for a minute, and you get a glimpse of a mind, a soul, calling—calling for help. And so often there is no one to help, no one who understands.—You see, then, why I'm worn a little thin to-day.—I'm like a man in a boat looking down on a stretch of water in which a person has sunk, and watching for some sign of his coming to the surface—an outstretched hand, a strand of floating hair; sometimes —so topsy-turvy is the whole situation—a foot, or even a toe. And I have to keep close watch, ready to seize hold on whatever comes up, and fight—fight—fight to keep it from sinking again.—Only with me, my people aren't limited to going down three times and then going out. They may go down and come up a hundred times. And yet, for all I know, each time *may* be the last.—That's where the strain comes in.—Watchfulness and fighting—fighting and watchfulness. That's my job, in cases of this kind.—And all the time I have the feeling that St. Paul had—that I'm not wrestling 'against flesh and blood,' but against something far stronger, far more clever. For if you don't watch out, the patient, or the patient's new personality, will play you some dirty trick or other.—Cunning and sly,

that's what they are.—You see, you never know—to use my simile of the man in the boat again—you never know exactly what is going on down there beneath the surface of the water—that is, below the external reactions of your patient's personality.—All you can do is to be constantly on the watch. Because you feel that there is danger—danger always."

"But you said," I interposed, as he stopped for breath, "you said there was no danger—that that kind of patient didn't die."

"And I meant what I said, in a sense.—But all this is poor stuff for you. I oughtn't to have let myself get talking about it. But sometimes it helps to put into words the things you're afraid of."

"What!" I broke in, "you afraid?"

"Why not? I'm human, am I not? I never told you that we could absolutely abolish fear. I've only been trying to lay the foundations of your own mental readjustment to it.—But, if you're so curious, I'll answer your question about my patient downstairs by a reference. Look it up after I'm gone—in the Bible; this time, in the Gospels.—You know the subject index at the back of the Bible I lent you. Same place where you found Naaman the Syrian.—Look up miracles, and under miracles, the casting out of devils.—You might read all those passages.—But especially the one about the swine of Gadara."

"Pigs?" said I, rather roughly. Somehow, I

did *not* like looking up Bible references I kept coming across places that reminded me of my boyhood—of our Sunday school in the stifling basement of our little wooden church—passages that I'd once learned by heart, and then—forgotten.

"Yes, pigs," he answered. "Pigs and devils.—And kindly note, in your reading, just what one kind of devil does when it gets a free hand, even with a pig."

He put his hand to his head with a kind of discouraged, tired gesture. I'd never seen him like this before.

"If you don't mind," he said, "I'll postpone our conference on the results of fear until our next meeting. It wouldn't be fair to you to try to do anything for you now, in my present state of mind. I don't exhale confidence and courage the way I ought to do. I can't inoculate you mentally with any of the things you need.—But you've got plenty of mental fodder to chew on.—Ruminate—not on what I've said to-day, but on your comparative good fortune.—For you—are *not* possessed of a devil. Only of a lot of second-class imps, that can be taken one by one and squashed."—He grabbed at a passing fly and caught it in his thin quick hands.—"Like this."

But I noticed that he did not kill the fly he had caught. For as he turned away toward the window I saw him open his hand and let the fly sail off into the summer air outside.

CHAPTER IX

THE RESULTS OF FEAR

No one who reads these chapters of mine must imagine that I have been able to make a really exhaustive record of all my experiences in the Nursing Home. I have left out a lot, of course. I don't describe the routine doings of each day, in which every hour, every minute almost, is taken up with some definite task or treatment, with "nourishment" or rest. Nor have I said anything about one part of each of my interviews with my Fear-Hunter. For one part of each visit was devoted to going over with a fine-tooth comb, as we used to say, the events and recollections of my past life. Beginning with my earliest memories and the sketchy notes that I had made of them in my blank-book, we had worked through those early years and were by this time—that is, the beginning of my third week in the Nursing Home—occupied with the doings of what they call my "adolescence." A darned disagreeable period for most men, I guess, when they come to look back on it and try to put it into words. At least it was for me, at first. However, as we went on, I seemed to lose all sense of shame. I could talk and even

write about the beastly things I said and did as a boy of fourteen, just as if I were writing about Willy Brown or Sammy Snooks. For my Fear-Hunter had a curious gift of cutting you loose from that feeling of discomfort and sneaking shame that comes over a man when he remembers those happenings of his boyhood which he has taken a lot of trouble to forget. Anyhow, he and I had cleaned out what he called the "shadowy cellar of childhood" and were well on our way to tidying up and exploring the "stuffy, smelly basement of adolescence."

But I don't want to leave out one or two important things that happened in between my Fear-Hunter's visits.

During the days, after his last appearance, when he had told me about the patient in the room just below mine, I had faced the inevitable, and had had—in two sittings—all my teeth out.—But all, mind you.—And what's more, I had had the bony sockets of these extracted teeth "curetted," as they call it. That means that the "operator" cuts right down into the gum and opens up the place where the root abscess lay.—I got all the right expressions from Dr. LeNoir, the dental surgeon.

Not a "*dentist.*"—You want to get that right, first off.—Not a man who "fills teeth" or who does the usual things that my home dentist—"Dentist Scrubbs" we call him—used to do. This man LeNoir is an artist. And this record of mine wouldn't be complete without some reference to him. I put

him in the same class with the Chief and my Fear-Hunter. Because he's a kind of man that I've never seen before.

Well, three days ago, the morning after my Fear-Hunter's last visit, Miss Frolich got me dressed and carried me off in a taxi to Dr. LeNoir's office.—I was in a sweat. I don't mind admitting it now.—Scared stiff, I was.—I'd had teeth extracted before. And the last time, when "Dentist Scrubbs" had injected something into my gums and had told me that "I should have no sensation of pain, dear sir, not even discomfort," he had hurt me—hurt me like Hell.—And my jaws had been sore and stiff for days afterward.—So, naturally, I didn't believe in this "painless dentistry" stuff. I'd been there myself, and I knew just how "painless" it was.

LeNoir has a nice waiting-room. No old copies of the *Ladies Home Journal* lying about. Only a lot of nicely bound books. And such books! All funny ones, written by "humorists" like George Ade, and the man who wrote *Speaking of Operations*. Miss Frolich gave me one, and we got laughing over it. So that I'd almost forgotten where I was. At last a white-dressed nurse led me into a big, high, airy back room. She put me in a chair, a sort of glorified dentist's chair, and then—she left me. I sat there, staring out of a big window at the spire of a distant church. All of a sudden, from somewhere behind me, a man in a white jacket appeared. I didn't hear him come; he just was suddenly there.

—Once, years ago, when I was on a business trip to Chicago, a big customer of ours took me to hear the Chicago Opera Company. "Faust" the name of the piece was. I don't know much about music, but some of it I'd heard before, played by brass bands. And that part I liked all right. I don't remember much about the plot of the thing; I didn't want to waste a quarter on "Words of the Opera," sold by a gum-chewing young fellow in the middle aisle. And anyway I didn't think much of the characters—no better than they should be, some of them. But one was grand. A big man with a big bass voice, who came up out of a trap door unexpectedly, in the first act, and went off through another trap, just as unexpectedly, in the last. Mephisto, he was, the Devil. (Dressed like the trade-mark on Pluto water.) But the most gentlemanly, efficient sort of a devil. Whenever he turned up in the opera, things began to happen right away. He pulled off one old fellow's white wig and long beard; and another time he did a trick with a tin cup and made fire come out of it.—And he had black eyebrows—and a pointed black beard.——

Well, if you can imagine that kind of a man, only reduced to a sort of pocket size, you'll get an idea of Dr. LeNoir. He could do tricks, too; a wizard, that's what he was.

"Now, Mr. Edwards," he laid his hand on my wrist, "don't be so tense. I am not going to hurt you in the slightest."

"I've heard that before," I said; and, knowing the ways of dentists, I "opened wide."

I felt a prick or two in the roof of my mouth. Then the nurse reappeared, and Dr. LeNoir sat on the ledge of the window, and told me a funny story. After a minute he said:

"Just let me have a look at those teeth again." So I "opened wide." I suspected that he was going to do something right then, so I shut my eyes and braced myself. But nothing much happened. I felt him sort of moving round inside my mouth; and when I opened my eyes I saw his hands passing up to my face and away again. And then, all of a sudden, my mouth was full of blood, and the nurse was offering me something to wash it out with, in a tumbler.

"We'll take the others out day after to-morrow," said my little wizard. He started to disappear behind me. But my tongue feeling round in my mouth had told me the good news already, and I switched round in the chair.

"You win," said I. "I apologize." But he was gone.

And two days later he relieved me of my other teeth in the same way. Only he appears and disappears so quickly—he works so accurately, so fast—that I've never had a chance to tell him what I think of him. I hope he sends me his bill soon. I look forward to paying it with pleasure. And that's something you can't say of bills as a rule.

In a week I'm going to another kind of dentist, to have the cast of my jaw taken. I'm pretty toothless just at present; I can't hold a cigar in my mouth, and I can't chew it, as I used to do. Also there are some letters of the alphabet that I can't pronounce. But I don't care. My mouth is "cleaned up."—And that's that.

I've had another piece of good luck. I've persuaded the night-attendant to give up her job here as attendant for the whole house, and to come on duty in this room every evening; not as a regular night-nurse—I don't need a nurse at night—but just as a sort of—protection—in case I should be sick in the night, or need someone.—She didn't want to do it, but I persuaded her after a while.

Then, I have actually finished a basket; it's a lopsided, wobbly basket, I know. But I made it—I myself—with these old fingers of mine. The washed-out, meek basket-lady pretended that she thought it was "wonderful for a beginner."—I'd made up my mind to do another one, only better; but the meek basket-lady has turned me over to a nice old German man, Mr. Nollmeyer, who's a bookbinder and who's going to teach me to bind books. I'm to begin next week.

To-day I had my fourth visit from my Fear-Hunter. He wasn't in a very talkative mood, but sat down at once in the deep armchair, heard what I had to say about Dr. LeNoir, admired my finished

basket, and refused—to say a word about Mrs. Fergusson, the case in the room below mine.

"We've no time to waste," he began, fishing out a very old-looking book from his side-pocket and balancing it on his knees. "Get out your note-book and let me discourse to you on the results of fear.

"In the first place, I don't want you to imagine that what I have been telling you about fear is something modern, some new psychological discovery. The ancients, of course, had not our knowledge of anatomy or of chemistry. But they knew fear and what fear might do to a man.—If you could read Greek, or even French, I could show you a passage in the works of an old Greek physician—Hippocrates, who lived about five hundred years before Christ, and who said that 'Anger and fear breed a poison in the blood.' In Greece and in Rome, the doctors knew that you could be poisoned by fear as well as by drugs.—Or, suppose you take a look at this old book that I've brought you. It was written by a famous physician named Sanctorius, who died about three hundred years ago. You'll find a section in it on 'The Affections of the Mind.' Read it carefully, and see how, three hundred years ago, men understood the physical results, the objective dangers, of fear. Listen to this:

> "Anger and joy make persons lighter, fear and sorrow, more heavy. Joy assists secretion

> to all parts of the body, and promotes circulation and digestion, raising the perspiration and making the body lighter; but fear is always attended with the opposite consequences: it checks the motion of the spirits and hinders circulation and digestion. If fear continues long, it will bring on a coldness of the flesh, because it hinders the exhalation of the perspirable matter. Joy assists the diastole and systole of the heart, but fear renders them more difficult.*

"The writer didn't know or understand what the connection between mind and body was, yet he knew that it existed. That's why he says, here on this page:

> "What the bond of union is between the mind and the animal fluids, God Almighty only knows; but there is no one thing better confirmed by experience, than that they mutually influence one another.

"You yourself have experienced the immediate results of fear—the physical weakness, the sense of dizziness, the sweat and sudden tremor. They can go so far that all integrated control of the bodily functions is lost, until the directing action of the personality is apparently suspended, and the body

**Medicina Statica, being the Aphorisms of Sanctorius.* Translated into English with large explanations by John Quincy, M.D. (fifth edition, T. Longman, London, 1737), pp. 296-320 *passim.*

moves on through the world like an automobile whose chauffeur has fallen in a dead faint at the steering-wheel. The body acts, moves; but behind movement and action there is no guiding or deciding force. Fear has paralyzed it. Only a shell, an empty automaton, remains. Of course, such conditions only develop under the first extreme shock of fear. Fortunately we cannot continue to exist under such circumstances very long.—For either the fainting chauffeur comes to himself and grasps the wheel again, or the undirected car smashes into something and there is a hideous tragedy.—The man who has been afraid and who still has to go on living, and working, and pretending—he must somehow adjust himself to his fear, so that he may bear it without letting other people know. And so he begins to build up what we call 'defenses.'

"You yourself are familiar enough with this mental mechanism from the experiences of your own childhood. You remember how you felt inferior to others, because of some misunderstood boyish habits, and how you began to build up a defense against this feeling by what we may call 'over-compensation.'—You felt timid, shy. Well, you would show yourself, and others, that you could be cheeky and pushing, and as much a 'man' as any of your crowd. Only, in order really to persuade yourself, you overdid the defense; instead of making yourself simply 'not shy,' you made yourself 'loud-mouthed,' a boaster. Instead of making yourself simply 'not

afraid' of others, you turned yourself into a fellow with a chip on his shoulder—surly, apparently always looking for trouble, although avoiding actual fights, and often, I fear, a bully toward the weak. This was the method of defense that you used as a boy. It is important to understand it. So let me give you a simple example.

"Let us take a man who is, in his heart, afraid of dogs. Not of big dangerous hounds, but scared of the veriest cur that yaps. He doesn't want people to know it. A man afraid of a dog—why, it would be a disgrace!—Well, he goes out one day to visit a friend in the country; and, as he opens the front gate, a dog—any kind of a dog—dashes out at him and begins to bark, and to dance around him—and keeps on barking. The ordinary man, who either loves dogs or has no feeling for them one way or the other, would walk on up the path, talking to the dog or whistling to it, or, if it really looked vicious, keeping it away from him with his stick. But this other fellow—the one who's afraid of dogs—he gets panicky. He can't show it; he can't turn back and go away. He has to prove to the people who are perhaps looking out of the front window—he has to prove to himself—that he isn't afraid of that dog at all. And so, before he knows whether the dog is dangerous or only barking for joy, he lashes out and hits the dog or kicks him. Kicks him hard. He'll show the dirty cur whether he's afraid of him or not.—Now a dog that's been kicked may do one of two things.

It may fly at the man who kicked it, and bite him; or it may be a broken-spirited pup, and crawl away with a yowl, its tail between its legs. If it bites the man who struck it in fear, then the man will be all the more afraid of dogs all his life; only the next time that a dog runs at him he may kick it before it even starts to bark. He may get so that he kicks or strikes or even shoots every dog he dares to harm. He may even set out poisoned meat.—Such a thing has happened more than once.—He has, you see, overcompensated, in his effort to protect himself against his fear.—Or, suppose that the dog doesn't bite him, but turns and runs. Then the man will feel that he has done the right thing; he will feel comforted in his soul. And he, again, will develop the habit of kicking every dog that yaps at him, because dogs always run away with their tails between their legs—until he happens to meet a different kind of dog, one that resents being kicked. And then he will be bitten badly—very badly.—And he'll have something to be afraid of always.—So, one way, or the other, it ends in fear.

"A man's efforts to protect himself from his fear usually end in the formation of two kinds of mental habits. We call them inhibitions and obsessions. Inhibitions are things that you want to do and can't. And obsessions are things that you don't want to do and must. Of course, they may be thoughts, as well as things or actions, these inhibitions and obsessions.

"You know, from your own experience, what an inhibition is. Your mind seems to 'get stuck' fast on one thing and can't pass on to the next. Remember how you used to go downstairs to lock the front door of your house, at night. Your mind was already filled with fear-thoughts that began as soon as you had to face the necessity of getting to bed—to the bed in which you feared that you might never wake up in the morning. You would lock that front door carefully; then, uncertain as to whether you had really locked it in the proper ritualistic way—twisting the key eighteen times to the right, wasn't it?—you would do it all over again. And you would stand there fiddling with the key—locking and unlocking—and utterly unable to STOP locking the door.

"Have you ever seen the old trick that country boys play with a rooster, in the barn? You hold the bird's head tightly between your two hands and bend it down, so that its eyes are fixed on a crack in the barn floor. Then, when you release the struggling bird, it is unable to move. It stands there with its eyes glued to the crack, twitching and shivering, with its head stretched out—hypnotized—inhibited by that crack in the floor. Lift it up, push it away from the crack, and it suddenly comes to life again, and runs off terrified and squawking.

"That is what happened to you, at your front door, evening after evening.—You might swear to yourself that never again would you spend twenty minutes

fussing with that door-key. And yet, when the next night came and you started to lock the door, you were caught in the same old way. Once you began that series of actions—once you started downstairs to the door—you were lost. Your only safety would have been not to go to the door at all. But, for that, you had not courage enough.

"Of course, inhibitions vary in strength. There are extreme mental conditions in which the inhibition is simply the result of the loss of all power to make any decision, even the simplest. We don't realize how, in the ordinary course of our daily life, we are making decisions all the time. Whenever there are two or more of anything, you have to make a decision before you can get on to something else. Take your dressing in the morning—what you call 'the completion of your toilette'—well, you have two socks, two shoes, a number of shirts, collars, neckties. In putting on your shoes, for example, you can't put them on both at once; you have to decide whether you will put on the right one or the left one first. But, if your power of decision has been impaired or blocked, then you simply can't make even this usually automatic decision. You sit on a chair, looking at your shoes, unable to make up your mind as to which you will put on first.

"I knew a very great lawyer once, who for many years used to get down to his office punctually at nine. But one winter his clerks noticed that he

was becoming unpunctual—that is, he would appear at half-past nine; after a while at ten. Evil tongues said that he had been dissipating, had been out all night, and was neglecting his business. The lawyer knew this. And yet he was powerless—he *could not* be punctual at the office in the morning. He was developing a typical depression in which his power to decide was blocked; and it was taking him longer and longer to dress every morning. He'd stand for fifteen minutes trying to make up his mind whether to put on a colored shirt or a white one. By the time he came to us for help, it was taking him an hour and a half to get dressed. And on his way downtown he would stand for five or ten minutes at a street corner, unable to decide whether he should take the street on his right or that on his left.

"In extreme cases, the usually automatic action of the mind is so blocked that the patient can't concentrate—can't read, can't write, can't speak, can't eat. He is like a man trying to drive a motor-car up a high hill with all the brakes set. You can realize what will happen to that car if the driver steps on the gas and speeds up his engine while the wheels are held motionless by the emergency brakes. —Something will go smash, sooner or later.—Just so the man suffering from an extreme depression. His mind is blocked, and yet he is trying to force himself to concentrate—to read, to write, to eat and talk. Imagine the amount of mental friction involved in such a process. Enough almost to set

the mind on fire. And surely, enough to make it sore, to strain it—to inflame it. Such a man's only safety lies in surrendering to the temporary blocking—to give up trying to do or to think, and to wait patiently, until he is better.—In your own case, the inhibitions have never been as strong as this. But they have been active enough to put a constant strain on mental processes that ought normally to act like a well-built, well-oiled engine—automatically, without conscious effort. In your case, also, most of your blocking was the result of your fears. Your subconscious mind became, especially at night, so flooded with fear that it had no strength left for controlling your actions accurately. Our minds are not limitless. They have only just so much space—a limited capacity.—Like an old garret, under the eaves, filled with the accumulation of years.—And finally they get so full that, if you want to put anything new in, you must move out some of the old. You had filled the whole place with fear; other things got crowded out. Things like your ability to review some habitual action and to find it properly done; your ability, after having automatically locked your front door, to think back rapidly over that complicated muscular activity, to separate mentally its various stages, and to pronounce them well and accurately performed. So, when you had locked the door and started to review the action mentally, you couldn't be sure of having done it properly—indeed of having done it at all.

"For the same reason, you began to forget people's names, had to write down everything in a little note-book, and thought that your 'mind was failing,' that you were 'getting softening of the brain.' A new name—or a fresh engagement—made no impression on your mind; there wasn't room for it in your garret. For you had filled every hole and corner with worries and fears.

"So much for inhibitions. They are excessively interesting phenomena. I'm not going into a deep psychological discussion of them. All I want to do is to give you a sort of working knowledge of their nature, so that you'll recognize one when you see it, and won't imagine that it is a symptom of paresis or senile dementia. If I were you, I'd take ten pages in that fat ledger note-book of yours and set down there all the inhibitions, all the mental blockings and stickings, that you can remember since your first bad fright about your blood-pressure.

"If patients would only keep records like that, they would help not only themselves, but us also. For, if you were willing to let me read what you had written, I should get a far better idea of what you have suffered than I can get from what you say. And the better, the wider my own knowledge, the more satisfactorily equipped I am to help others.

"Obsessions, however, seem to have been more prominent in your case than inhibitions. Let's have a look at them. You've told me something about the

obsessive actions that you have to go through with at night."

"Had to, once," I interposed. But he shook his head.

"I don't believe you," he went on. "No one ever got entirely rid of his obsessive ritual in a few weeks, when he had been building it up for months. No, even if you've dropped the obsession of having to lock the front door, that's because there is no front door here to lock—no door that you can get at. And that's one reason why, for a man in your condition, a change to a perfectly new environment is absolutely necessary. For a lot of the obsessive ritual is bound up with the environment in which it developed. So, in perfectly strange surroundings, you get at least a new start. Only remember the old Latin quotation: *'Coelum mutamus, non animum.'*—We change our environment, but we take ourselves, our same old selves, with us. I know that you have shreds and tatters of your old ritual still clinging round the hours before bedtime.—You'll tell me about them all in detail, some day.—Meanwhile—if you're brave enough, able to face your own ridicule—take ten other pages in your book and set down a detailed description of all the obsessive things you used to do, or do still, before you can get into bed and asleep. It may hurt your pride, for these things look unutterably foolish on paper.—And it is an enlightening fact that, when we do them, we don't want to be seen; we don't

even want to see ourselves.—If you look back on your own bedtime obsessions you'll find that, while you were doing some of them—probably the most important to you, yet at the same time the most peculiar—you kept your eyes shut. Isn't that so?"

I nodded. I had forgotten it. But he was right, as he usually was.

"And the reason for it," he went on, "was your fear of catching sight of yourself in the looking-glass on your dressing-table. If you had caught such a glimpse of yourself—going through some strange ritual—you'd have felt horribly ashamed. Yet you knew that you HAD to go through it, and, as you didn't want to see yourself as you really looked—why, you shut your eyes.—One way, a sort of brutal way to cure a man in your condition, would be to make him go through his ritual before a mirror. Only, of course, he wouldn't play fair. Instinctively he'd shut his eyes.

"But let's get away from all ethical judgments of these obsessions. They may not be particularly pleasant to look at; but then I can give you hundreds of symptoms of bodily disease that are not pleasant to look at either. And we don't blame a man who has a cancer of the face because the sight of him distresses us; nor do we laugh at a woman twisted with arthritis because she walks 'in such a ridiculous way.' I want you to see your obsessions in the right light.

"They were your defenses. Against the invading

enemy, Fear. You weren't strong or brave enough to meet your enemy face to face, and have it out with him in one pitched battle. Mighty few of us are brave enough for that.—So you 'dug yourself in.'—You threw up a mound of earth behind which you could hide, and which seemed to protect you.—You couldn't get rid of the enemy; he was there, just in front of you somewhere, and he might attack at any moment.—But, behind your wall, deep down in your trench, you felt temporarily safe.

"It is hard to get at the very beginning of a mental defense of this kind. One can only use examples as imperfect illustrations. Suppose we take one single act from among all the complex system of your evening ritual—your obsession about your clothes. For you will remember that you told me about that, in a general way.—You have been, I suppose, always an orderly man. It has been your custom, night after night, to place your clothes, on a chair by your bed, in a certain orderly manner. I don't know how far back this goes in your life, but——"

"I can tell you that," I interposed. "I was thinking about it last night.—When I was a kid, our next-door neighbors had a fire. Nobody hurt; but my friend, Reddy Edgar, ran out into the yard in his night-shirt, and his clothes were all burned. So I used to put my own clothes close to my bed at night, and fixed in such a way that I could grab the

whole lot with one hand, and my shoes with the other."

"Good! Then it was a fear-reaction from the beginning. As the years went on, of course, you forgot what it had first meant, and I dare say you'd automatically hang your clothes over the chair by your bed, more or less carelessly, without thinking about it at all.—Then came your first attack of fear.—That night, after you had received that letter from the insurance company and had been tense and sick with fear all the afternoon, you were, for the first time in your life, afraid to go to sleep. You feared that you might die in the night; that you might be taken suddenly ill, and be unable to summon help before it was too late. Automatically, as usual, you arranged the clothes by your bedside. Well, that night, nothing happened.—You did not die; you 'got through' safely.—The next night those clothes on the chair had assumed a new significance; they were associated in your mind with the previous night, through which you had come alive. And, on this second night, with the same fears of what might happen during the dark hours crowding around you, you wanted to re-create the situation of the night before, and make this present night a safe one also. So you arranged your clothes somewhat more carefully, thinking about the position in which each garment should lie. If the second night passed off quietly, then, on each following evening, you would feel that if you did *not*

arrange your clothes in a certain way, it might bring bad luck somehow. The arranging of the clothes was associated now in your mind with fear; and the only way to neutralize this fear was to arrange them in a certain way. If you had a bad night—had one of your 'attacks'—then you would feel sure that somehow you had not arranged the clothes exactly right, and you would be still more particular in future. Thus your inhibitions would work into your obsessions, and you would have to arrange the clothes over and over again, never being sure that they were 'exactly right,' and only after repeated arrangements able to satisfy your mind that they were so arranged as not to bring bad luck.

"You can test and prove this for yourself. To-night, when you come up against some remnant of your complex ritual, try not to do it or say it, and then see how you feel."

"Oh, I know now how I'll feel," I answered. "I've tried it often enough. But you *have* to do it or say it. If you don't, why you feel so uncomfortable, so scared of something going to happen, that after a while you go back and do the thing you said you wouldn't do. You couldn't go to sleep otherwise. And it's so much easier to do the darn thing and get it over with. Then, somehow, you feel all right and can go to sleep."

"You see, it is all a defense against fear. After a while the simple ritual action gets more and more complex; you add to it a few subsidiary actions, so

as to make it more sure, more powerful. And, gradually, the ritual assumes an objective power of its own. At first, you did it in a sort of blind desire to keep off some danger. After a little while, it becomes not merely a negative protection; it acquires an objective power to ward off evil—to keep you 'safe.'—This is the history of all primitive religions, of all folk-medicine—repeating itself in the mind of the individual when mental stress and strain have thrown that mind back to the lower levels of primitive thinking.

"Put this down, then, in your note-book. 'Obsessions and the routine ritual evolved from them are defenses that don't defend. The safety that they give isn't permanent.'

"For here lies the danger of this imagined safety. It has to be bought at a price, and that price is higher every time. It is something like the action of certain drugs. You take, let us say, some preparation to make you sleep; and you do sleep. But after a while one tabloid doesn't give sleep any more; you have to take two. And after another while, three. Finally, either you must give up trying to get sleep in this way, or you must inevitably poison and kill yourself by the increased doses of your hypnotic.—Take obsessive hand-washing, with its underlying fear of contamination, for instance. At first the patient gets rid of her fear by washing and disinfecting her hands twice a day. But the fear, as I've shown you, keeps invading conscious-

ness more and more; and every time it comes, the only way in which the unfortunate woman can get rid of it—not in order that she may be merely comfortable but so that she may be able to go on with her daily duties of cooking and washing and caring for her family—is by washing and disinfecting her hands.—Until, like some sort of a poisonous tropical growth that creeps in as a single tendril by the open window and grows and grows until it fills the whole room and binds its occupant hand and foot—until there is nothing in the patient's life BUT hand-washing; until, in order to find time for the hand-washing and her household duties too, she can find only a few hours for sleep; until the poor hands are raw and sore, so sore that finally they cannot do any work at all, except go on being washed, and washed, and washed.—There lies the danger.

"One more point, and then I've done with this long and very dull exhortation. In connection with obsessive ritual, I said that the mind was thrown back to lower levels of primitive thinking; that it acted and felt like the mind of primitive, half-savage man. But this power of fear to do what I call 'lower the levels' is found also in the sphere of bodily activities. Once understand this and you will be in a position to discredit a whole lot of disagreeable bodily sensations which you, for the past months, have been misinterpreting into symptoms of heart-disease, gastric ulcer, cancer and a thousand other terrible possibilities.

"*Fear*—write this down—*lowers the level of consciousness.*

"Let me show you what I mean by the level of consciousness."

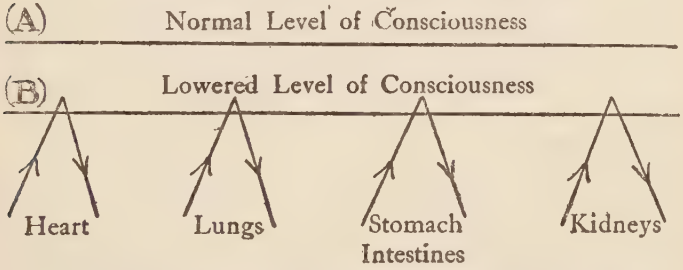
The Doctor took my pencil, after I had written what he told me, and drew a diagram, something like this.

Normal Level of Consciousness

"This long line," he said, pointing to it with my pencil, "represents the normal level of consciousness. Every activity or movement in the body that touches this line or reaches above it, comes into our consciousness as a sensation, pleasant or unpleasant. But in our bodies there are all sorts of complex movements—many spheres of bodily activity that do not intrude upon consciousness at all. The heart has its own system for controlling nerves, for regulating its beat, for managing the opening and the shutting of the valves, but normally we are not conscious of this. A healthy heart adapts itself to the varied necessities of the body's work without our realizing what it is doing. So with the lungs; so with

the digestive tract, and with the kidneys. In this diagram I have indicated waves of nervous activity flowing into the heart, in and out, and regulating it. So with the other organs that I've mentioned.—Now, if you look at my sketch, you'll see that none of these waves of nervous force, none of the movements and readjustments caused by them, reaches the level of consciousness. The normal body goes on with its regular work without interfering with our thinking apparatus. The healthy man doesn't know he has a stomach.

"But take a look now at this second diagram, the same one as before, except for one slight change. The line that I called the level of consciousness has been drawn a little lower down in the picture.



"I have marked the normal level, as it appeared in my first diagram, as (A). Look, now, at the lower line, which I have marked (B). Something has happened in the mind or the body of a person whose usual level of consciousness was at (A). This something has, somehow, 'lowered the level of consciousness.'—Please write down those five words;

they are very important.—Notice what happens on this lowered level.—The waves of nervous force, the activities and automatic adjustments of the inner organs—heart, lungs, intestines, and so forth—that never reached the normal level, are now obtruded as sensations into consciousness. They reach the lowered level; they pass it—some more, some less. And, as a result, the person in question begins to be conscious of a lot of sensations which, to him, are new. He has never been conscious of them before. And yet they have been going on in his body all the time. Because they are new, he misinterprets them; he begins to imagine that they must 'mean something,' that they are symptoms of some disease. He never was conscious of his heart before; or of his digestive organs. Now, all of a sudden, he begins to feel his heart beat; he has sensations of fullness in his stomach. And, since he doesn't know the why and the wherefore of these things, he gets frightened.

"Now, just here lies the danger of being frightened, the danger of the same old vicious circle. There are many things that lower the level of consciousness—bodily exhaustion, mental stress and strain, and especially fear. A man like yourself gets some sudden mental shock that throws him off his emotional equilibrium, and that fills body and mind with fear-reactions. This lowers the level of consciousness. And gradually, or sometimes at once, he becomes conscious, let us say, of strange dis-

quieting sensations around his heart. He thinks at once of 'heart-disease.' If he was scared before, he is now more frightened than ever. And the more frightened he gets—the more fear-reactions he sets going in his body—why, the lower sinks his level of consciousness and the more plainly does he become aware of all sorts of disquieting feelings or symptoms in various parts of his body. It's the blood-pressure *circulus vitiosus* all over again. The more frightened he gets, the more definitely he keeps his level of consciousness down, and the lower it is and the longer it stays at this lower level, the more frightened he becomes.

"And then, after a while, the accumulated fear-poisons begin really to interfere with his physical machinery. You don't need to be told how easily the digestive apparatus is upset by emotion. You come down to breakfast some morning with a good appetite, looking forward to a satisfying meal. Beside your plate lies a telegram that brings you bad news. Almost at once your appetite for breakfast vanishes. And what little you can eat tastes bad; you begin to gulp, and there is a nasty sourness in your mouth. I've already shown you how emotional stress reacts on your blood-pressure, and on your heart. So, if the fear-reactions continue and if the level of consciousness remains low, you are like a man fighting a battle with both hands tied behind him. For the normal action of your internal organs, or of some of them, has been interfered

with; and, at the same time, thanks to your lowered level, you are ten times more conscious of these changes than you would have been had the level remained in its normal place.—So you get it going and coming.—No wonder that St. John wrote that 'fear hath torment.' "

The Doctor came over to me and sat down on my bed. He took from my table the Bible he had lent me.

"I'm putting the text of my 'discourse' at the end, instead of at the beginning."—Then, with a sidelong look at me, as if he were going to say something that he knew I shouldn't understand, he added: "That's a peculiarity of mine—in theological matters. I'm always tempted to turn things round the wrong way. Or perhaps I ought to say 'the other way.'—For my way may be the right way, after all." He let the thin leaves of the English Bible run through his fingers. "I hear that you are learning bookbinding," he went on.—"The first thing that you learn, so I've heard, is to take some old book apart and see how it has been put together. Now I wonder whether old Nollmeyer wouldn't let you use a Bible for that purpose."

"But not this one," I interposed quickly. Had he forgotten, I wondered, that on the fly leaf of that Bible his own name was written? And—"On the day of his First Communion from his Mother."

"Get Miss Frolich to buy you a cheap New Testament," he went on, without apparently notic-

ing my interruption; "one with big plain type. Take it apart; unsew it, or rip up the quires. And then—rebind it—for me."

"For you?" I asked. "But I don't know how yet."

"Nollmeyer will help you. And you'll be doing me a favor. I've always wanted a New Testament rebound in a certain way.—Just separate the unsewn quires according to books; the Gospels and the Acts in one pile, St. Paul's letters in another, and so on. Then, rearrange them in this order.—Here, I'll write it down for you.—Put first—in the place where St. Matthew is usually—those Catholic epistles or letters, that are stuck away off near the very end of the New Testament. The letters of St. John—he's to come first; then those of St. Peter and St. James. After these, put in all St. Paul's letters, beginning with the general ones, and ending with the letter to the Hebrews, that he never wrote anyway. And, oh, I forgot—put the Revelation of St. John, the last book in the New Testament, just after St. John's letters, so that we can get him all together.—Then, when you've finished with St. Paul's correspondence, put in the Gospels—first St. Mark, then St. Matthew, and then St. John.—And finally, at the end of the book, St. Luke and the Acts.—Will you do that for me?—I've always wanted to have a New Testament like that."

"But why?" I protested. "It doesn't seem to me exactly—exactly reverent, somehow.—Tearing up a Bible brings bad luck. I've always heard that.—

Not but that it might be more interesting than making baskets. Only——"

The Doctor gave one of his scornful snorts.

"The sooner you get away from the bad-luck obsession, the better.—Re-binding this New Testament for me will be a good discipline. Besides, while you are arranging the quires, it is just possible that your eye may catch a word, here and there.—Don't forget, though, my reasons for quoting to you occasionally from what you call 'The Good Book.' My aim is *not* a religious one; I'm aiming at your readjustment, at your re-education. Also, incidentally, at your English."

I wasn't going to stand for that.

"See here," I put in, "I went through high school, didn't I? I'm educated—at least, I am some."

"I never said you weren't," he snapped. For he was getting tired of talking, and so was I. "I spoke of *re*-education. I dare say that you were once taught enough—that you have forgotten enough—and that 'that enough' can be brought to the surface of your mind again. What we want is to connect 'that enough' with your present life. It's not a question of building a new house from the bottom up, but of taking the old homestead—that you've not visited for years, that lies forgotten outside your daily life and of making it first fit for you to live in, and then making you yourself fit and anxious to go and live there for the rest of your days. —But I don't mind telling you why I want that

Testament re-bound in my own way.—I believe that the order in which the books now come in our Bible is wrong. I want to turn the order right around, just as I said a moment ago. For I feel sure that those letters of St. John were a great deal nearer in time and in spirit to the life—the earthly life of St. John's Master—than any of the Gospels. You see, when the apostles started out on their missionary journeys, there was no need of Gospels. They could tell the story themselves. They had been 'eye-witnesses.' And after they had made groups of converts in some city or village, they would write them a letter.—During the past forty years the archaeologists have discovered thousands of letters of this very period, written on papyrus, in Greek, in the Greek of the New Testament that was once such a puzzle.—St. John would write, so would St. James and St. Peter. It was only years later that St. Paul —long after his conversion, and after long years of traveling—wrote the letters which have come down to us.—But even for St. Paul there was no need of a Life of Our Lord—a written message. Only, as the old eye-witnesses began to die or were martyred, and as the secondary line of them—the disciples who were not apostles but who had known the Master—began to thin out, did it occur to some of these latter to 'set in order' on papyrus—in a book —a record of the things 'that had been most surely believed' among them from the beginning. So the Gospels came into existence last of all.—That's why

I want a re-bound New Testament.—For when I read the epistles of St. John, for instance, I feel that I am closer somehow to the historical facts of Christianity—close through the beloved disciple to the Master whom he loved and with whom he walked by the shore of Gennesaret."

He stopped, and let his voice trail off into silence. I had never heard him talk like this before. And while he sat there on my bed, staring off into the distance, I wondered for the first time, as I wondered often afterward, why it was that when talking about religion or the Bible he would take such a lot of trouble to avoid the use of one Name. With us Methodists—or perhaps it's fairer to say, in the religion in which I was brought up—there's no hesitation in speaking the name of Jesus. Why, in a sermon or at a prayer-meeting, or even in ordinary religious talk, you'd hear it every minute.—But this Doctor of mine seemed almost afraid to say the name.—He'd sort of hint at it, or use other expressions in place of it.—And yet never for an instant did I fail to know whom he meant.—Something in the tone of his voice would have told me that anyhow.—Once or twice, just out of contrariness, I came out flat with the name myself. And when I did, he'd sort of wince, and duck or bow his head, as if I'd hurt him. So I never did it again.—Some day I must ask him what he really does believe. I'd like to know. I have a feeling that it might do me good, as if he had got hold of some sort of secret, some

religious idea of his own that would be worth knowing. Only if I asked him straight out, he'd crawl right back into his shell.

Thoughts like these were slipping through my mind as I waited for him to speak again. At last I said, for I was getting embarrassed and nervous:

"All right, Doc. I'll try to make your topsy-turvy Bible for you. Even if it does bring me bad luck."

That would start him off again, I knew.

"Not topsy-turvy at all," he interposed. "Only turned round the other way. And besides, there is good authority for putting the last first, and the first last. But I must be off. I've stayed too long and I've wearied you with a long tedious discourse. But it had to be gone through with. We're working up along a dark slope; but soon I hope we'll get to the sunlight and the top of the mountain. Good-by."

"One minute," I said, pointing downward with my finger. "How are things below there?"

He turned in the doorway. The look of tired discouragement that I had noticed during his last visit was on his face again. I felt sorry for having bothered him.

"I'm not sure," he answered, as he put on his old gray felt hat and pulled one edge of the rim down over one eye. "On the surface, things look quieter. But what's going on underneath, I can't tell.—Ever read *Pilgrim's Progress* by one John Bunyan?—You

must have seen it in your boyhood.—Perhaps you remember the place where Christian fights Apollyon.—A sly adversary he was; you never knew from what side he was going to attack.—Well, I'm not Christian.—I wish I were, for he had armor of sorts and a sword.—But I'm fighting the same sort of a battle.—And—and I don't know, for sure, what's coming next."

Interlude

This isn't really a chapter at all. I asked Miss Frolich what you call the piece of music that the orchestra in a theater plays at the end of an act, while the men go out to smoke and get a drink. "Overture" is the piece at the beginning. I've seen that on theater programs often enough.—She says "Interlude." That doesn't sound exactly right to me. "Intermission" sounds better.

Anyhow, since I want to write a page or two without mentioning any of my Doctor's discourses, I may as well call it an "Inter"-something.

And the thing that I want to write about is this. I've had a visit from the Chief himself. Since I first saw him, he's been not only in New Mexico but in Canada too. He even passed through my own home town, and wired Dr. Willis, my doctor, to come down to the depot, and talked with him on the train, while it changed engines. A simple enough thing to do, and yet it gave me a different feeling toward him; it brought us closer together.

Well, as I said, he came to see me this morning—came in like a commanding general followed by his staff. Four of them, all doctors. Dr. Oldham King opened the door; then the Chief walked in, and after him came three other men in white jackets. These three grouped themselves at the foot of my bed, while Dr. King stood beside me, and sort of "demonstrated" me to the Chief. And whenever the Chief spoke, one of the men at the foot of my bed wrote down his words in a book. Another one held my chart—which has grown to almost a book by this time. It was very impressive. Finally, and to the apparent astonishment of the assistants, the Chief motioned them all out of the room, and came and sat down by my bed. Miss Frolich also had been hovering around, holding on to a thermometer, as a kind of excuse for being there. But he sent her away too.

When we were alone he told me of having seen my home doctor, and said some pleasant things about my home town. I started to tell him about myself, but he stopped me.

"I've seen all that on the records," he said. "In the life of a busy physician, the one unpardonable sin is wasting time by repetition." Then, looking at me beneath the palm of his left hand, with which he shaded his eyes, he added: "How do you get on with our psychiatrist?"

That was easy to answer. But my curiosity got me in wrong.

"First rate," said I. "Only—only—he's sort of—sort of mysterious.—Never talks about himself.—During these last weeks I've got to know him rather intimately, in a way; and yet in another way, I don't know him at all.—Where does he come from?"

The Chief kept on looking at me from beneath his hand.

"He comes from where most useful men come from—from bitter experience; from the place where doctors learn most—from life. From walking up and down in the world, with his eyes open."

"That doesn't tell me much," said I.

"It will tell you enough," the Chief answered. "But, inasmuch as he seems interested in your case for some reason or other, I'll tell you one more thing.—You want to be grateful for a man like that; grateful to the chance that has brought him to your bedside. At the same time, you should realize why. He comes to you with a wide sympathy, with a deep understanding; and because of this he is able to help you. For that help, you are, I know, grateful.—But don't forget what it has cost him to develop the understanding, and to deepen the sympathy, that helps you. He is like some powerful efficient instrument, that cuts clean because it has been tempered and sharpened——"

"I know," I interposed. "I've often compared him to an old scythe worn down by the whetstone to a fine edge."

"Good sound metal, to start with," the Chief went on. "Some steel, you know, won't take a fine edge. Whetting only brings out the flaws in it.—I'm pleased that you understand.—So, when you're tempted to ask him personal questions, just remember the long process by which the steel was first tempered—the hammering on the anvil, the repeated heating in the forge-fires, the long years of constant whetting, first a little on this side, then a little on that. Take the instrument that's so well fitted for your work; be grateful for it, and don't ask too much about the whetstone and the fires of the forge.—It may well be that they are not very pleasant memories."

As he got up to go, he stood beside my bed, turning over the books on my little table.

"*Pilgrim's Progress,*" he said. "Who gave you the secret of that?—I can guess.—But I hope you use it in the right way. A chapter, or a few pages, at night, read aloud to you in a quiet voice, when you're tense and sleepless—why, it's of more use to me than all the hypnotics in the pharmacopeia. It isn't the story itself, of course. It's the sound of the balanced phrases—like the far-heard murmur of the sea.—Mr. Edwards, I congratulate you.—Either I did not do you justice in my first estimate, or else you are showing an ability to absorb—to adapt—that I did not know you possessed."

I felt proud.—The Chief, I knew, didn't praise often.

"You see," I said, "I am being—not educated—but *re*-educated.—With the accent on the 're.' "

He gave me one of those smiles of his that I've tried to describe in another chapter. Smiles were rare things, with him.

"I am beginning to understand," he said, as he opened the door, "my colleague's interest in your case."

(*Later. An Extract from my Diary Notes.*)

It is after half-past six; no one has come yet with my supper. Something has gone wrong in the house somewhere. I think that it must be downstairs; in the room under me, perhaps. The room where my Fear-Hunter has been fighting with Apollyon. At about five I heard the doors downstairs open and shut; I heard people running to and fro. And the sounds of voices, especially the booming masculine tones of the manageress of the house. What has happened, I wonder?—Perhaps Mrs. Fergusson has suddenly come out from under her black cloud. I hope so.—I'll ask Miss Frolich, when she brings my tray.

(*Later Still. Eight O'clock.*)

I couldn't get a word out of my nurse. My supper was half an hour late; some trouble in the diet kitchen, she said.—Maybe.—But that wasn't all.—However, everything is quiet now downstairs. —My night-attendant—I've never asked her her

name—I don't want to know it—I don't think of her as an attendant anyhow—she is sitting by her little lamp. I feel nervous and—and scared to-night.—I think I'll ask her to read me a chapter from *Pilgrim's Progress*.—When I was a boy I had a copy of that book. Mother gave it to me, one Christmas. And I remember how disappointed I was when I opened it and found it a "religious Sunday-school book."—I'd expected an adventure story, or travels, at least.—I never read it. But it had pictures in it. To this day I remember some of those.—I'll ask my—my attendant to bring her lamp a little closer to my bed, and to read me the part where the picture is of the pilgrim with the pack on his back falling off into a deep hole. Only she'll have to prop the book up on the table in front of her so that she can have her hands free.—I want her to keep on with her knitting.

My Fear-Hunter is due to-morrow.

CHAPTER X

THE FEARFUL AND THE TORMENTS OF FEAR

This is going to be a hard chapter to write. I've got my notes on my Doctor's discourse, but it was shorter than usual, and his mind wasn't on it.—Besides, we were both stirred up and excited.

He came in at his usual time in the afternoon, holding in his hands a little flat rectangular box, about three inches long by two wide, and about half an inch high. It was covered with glass. On the bottom was pasted a colored picture-postcard of the big church in Paris, Notre Dame, that I'd seen from a taxi, years ago. On the front of the church—in the postcard, I mean—were about fifteen little indentations, just where you might expect that the electric lights on a building would be. And in the box itself, running round the edge, in a jumping shimmering ball, was a little lump of quicksilver—mercury—the thing that drops out of a thermometer when you break off the end. (I did that once as a boy; father licked me for it. Mean of him, too, for the thermometer was no good; it hung on the wall of our best parlor; no one ever went in there anyway, and no one ever looked at the

thermometer—except me.) Well, the idea of my Doctor's little box was this. You held it very steady in your hands, and you tried to separate the lump of mercury so that it would roll into and fill every one of the little holes on the front of the church. When you got all fifteen of them filled, they lighted up the picture like shining little lamps.

"Here," said my Fear-Hunter, putting the box into my hands. "I'll give you five minutes. Let's see how many of the holes you can fill."

My hands weren't any too steady. The mercury kept slipping out of the holes. But it was fascinating, in a way. When the Doctor called time on me, I had filled only eight. While I had been playing this new game, he had been turning over the pages of two books that he held on his knee.

"I had intended," he began, settling himself in his usual position in the deep chair, "to say something to you to-day about the torments of fear—about the Fearful—the people who are filled with it.—But I think, perhaps, if you'd read——"

"Then you'd better pull up the shades," I interrupted. For, as he had come, as usual, just at the end of my afternoon rest hour, the room was still dark. I could scarcely see his face. But he had turned on the electric lamp by my bed, so that I might see clearly enough to try his new French game. He himself had kept well outside the circle of light that it threw.

He paid no attention to what I said.

"Old Nollmeyer tells me," he went on, "that you've started pulling a New Testament to pieces; that you've rearranged the quires, and are beginning to sew them together."

"He does most of the work," I growled.

"Well, last time I referred, incidentally, to the book that is to come first in this new arrangement. The letters of St. John. Somewhere in the third chapter of the first letter you'll find the statement that 'fear hath torment.'"

"I know," said I. "I read it."

"Good for you," he answered. "The word fear caught your eye, I suppose." He had an uncanny way of knowing just what I had done. It was almost as if he'd intended me to do it from the first. "Now, the word that's translated 'torment' in English is a Greek word, *kolasis*.—Don't bother to note it down; I'll write it out in your book for you in Greek.—And *kolasis* usually means chastisement, correction. It means, also, the pruning of a tree, the checking of its growth.—The usual word for punishment in Greek is quite a different one. I'm not a New Testament scholar; I can't go into all the intricate discussions about the meanings of these two words. You'll find it all, I think, in a book on New Testament synonyms written by old Archbishop Trench—a learned, dry book by a high-and-dry learned man.—Personally, I think that St. John means more than one thing.—Fear has torment; we all know that. But fear has, that is, it is

intimately connected with punishment; it is, in a sense, its own punishment. It carries, inevitably, its own curse with it. Besides, this punishment, this *kolasis,* is a sort of stunting process—not a pruning of a tree so that it may grow the more rapidly, but a checking of its growth. What we call to-day an inhibition. That we talked about in our last conference.—You can expand St. John's three Greek words into a statement that fear results in a sort of checking of the mind, in inhibitions; that it brings with it its own special punishment or curse; and that it 'has torment.'

"I could talk to you all day on the various torments of fear. But you yourself have had experience of certain types of torment. Though, thank God, you haven't descended very deep into the pit.—So I want to introduce you to a better description of that pit than I could ever give. Read it—and then praise God for what you've been spared.

"This description was written by a saintly man of the sixteenth century, a Spaniard, a man of intense faith, of great personal piety; a man who believed so keenly in the sinfulness of his body that he spent a great part of his life tormenting and torturing it, so as to make it more obedient to the soul. This is a point of view that seems idiotic to the average hundred-percent American, just as the gospel once seemed 'to the Greeks foolishness.' Now, this holy man, in spite of a life devoted abso-

lutely to the service of his God—a God of love, mind you—was allowed, so he believed, by this same God, to sink into the very depths of the pit of the torments of depression and fear. But—and this is the important point—he did not rebel—did not try to shake off the depression and imagine himself calm and happy. On the contrary, he accepted it as coming—as all things did in his eyes—from a loving God, who sent it for his good. And so, waiting patiently in that darkness of fear (for, among his other trials, he even lost his faith), he wrote down what he experienced, and—while writing, came out safely into the sunlight, into a renewed faith, into a broader, larger spiritual life. And he called the little book that he wrote, *Atra Nox Animae*—'The Dark and Dreadful Night of the Soul.' *

"His name, as it stands in the Church's calendar on the twenty-fourth of November, is St. John of the Cross. I've brought you a volume of the great *Bollandist Lives of the Saints,* so that you can read his life for yourself. It won't appeal to you much. It is hard for us to get his point of view.

"And this other book, this little one, is a translation of *The Dark Night.* I don't want you to read it all. You won't understand most of it; at least, not yet.—But pick out some of the chapters

**Les Petits Bollandistes Vies des Saints* par Mgr. Guerin. (7ieme edition, Bloud et Barral, Paris, 1880), Vol. XIII, pp. 577-585.

The Dark Night of the Soul by San Juan de la Cruz, translated by Miss Cunninghame Graham. London, Watkins, 1922.

that are headed 'The Kinds of Torment that the Soul Suffers in This Night.'

"You see, I am anxious for you to begin to get a little light into your darkness. We have been talking so much about fear, its origins, the way it works and all that. But we've said nothing yet about the why and wherefore of it—if there be a why and a wherefore. We haven't found out if it has any sense, any usefulness. Nor have we turned to the thought of remedies or antidotes. But St. John of the Cross will start you on the up-road. In him, the two extremes meet. The extremity of the deepest, most helpless, the blackest depression and fear; and at the same time, the extreme faith and trust in the God who is back of all this torment and who is the only explanation of it, the only source of power to endure it.—I don't say that I agree with St. John of the Cross.—Oftentimes I wish that I could.—But he taught me something. —If you read a little in his book, he'll teach you something too.

"Among the minor torments of fear are those obsessive chains of thought, that go round and round in your mind, without your being able to stop them. —Like a tune that gets into your head and that drives you nearly mad with its repetition. Fear somehow sensitizes the mind to this torment, or perhaps it weakens our power of turning away from one association to another by concentrating on one thought and so blotting out all the rest.

For in fearful people you will find that they have certain typical chains of ideas, one idea chained tightly to another, so that when one of those ideas comes into their minds, they have to think out the whole chain to the very end. And this keeps them from concentrating on their own work. When you see a man suddenly take two hours to do a bit of work that he used to do in fifteen minutes, you may suspect that he's fearful, that he has established one or many connected chains of obsessive thoughts, and that he is constantly following one of these chains round and round. For they are like the endless chains that, as a boy, I used to see on the wheels of a well, the chain on which the little buckets hung, and that went round and round—round and round.—If you rub a place on your hand, the same spot, all the time, it will get sore, then red; finally the skin will break.—The mind is much the same.—If these chains of obsessive thoughts run through the mind, trotting one after the other, always in the same path—boots—Boots—BOOTS—BOOTS—as Kipling says—why, after a time, the mind gets sore. And if you touch a sore spot, it hurts. If you keep on rubbing it, or walking on it, it hurts worse.—So, once the mind has become sore, why, every time one of these chains of thought begins, stamping over the ground worn sore by its feet, the mind shrinks—it is hurt—so that the movement through the mind of these obsessive thoughts becomes a torment almost unendurable.—

You've got to break the chain somehow; you've got to give the sore, quivering mind a rest—or else—well—there's a limit to all human endurance, mental or physical.—Mr. Kipling says—to quote his 'Boots' again, that 'There's no discharge in the war.' There is, in a sense, no way of normally regaining one's liberty. But there is always one way out. The soldier can sit down, refuse to move, be court-martialed and shot.—Human beings—who can't stand the 'boots, boots, boots' in their minds any longer—may do the same thing.—If you let them."

It was this last sentence, I suppose, that stuck in my mind. The Doctor handed me his little French game again. He sat watching me while I tried it. This time I got eleven of the holes filled with the mercury in five minutes.

"That's better," he said. Yet it never dawned on me, at the time, that this was a new trick of his to test the trembling of my hands. When a doctor made me hold out my hands and I knew what he was looking for, my fingers would wabble and twitch.—But with the French game it was different. "And now I'll be off."

"Pull up the blind, will you please?" said I. And as he did so, I got my first good look that day at his face. It gave me a jolt; I had never seen him look so ill. And then, somehow, his last words about "boots," and the soldier getting shot, had been simmering in my mind; and I remembered what had happened last evening. Or rather I remem-

bered that no one had been willing to tell me what *had* happened. Besides, I was worried about the way he looked.

"See here," said I, as he started to leave me, "I don't want to stick my nose into what doesn't concern me. But I don't like the way you look." Then I pointed to the floor. "Has—has anything happened—down there?"

For a moment he stood staring at me. Then he walked back into the room and leaned over the foot of my bed.

"Why shouldn't you know?" he said, half to himself. "I told you the beginning—foolishly, perhaps. Why not the end?"—Then, fidgeting and fumbling with his old gray hat, he burst out: "I was tricked —lulled into a momentary sense of security by that—that clever thing that wears Mrs. Fergusson's body.—I ought to have suspected it.—Ought to have felt that a change for the better couldn't come so soon—a real change.—And my confidence, I suppose, trickled through into the minds of the nurses.—Anyhow, we slackened up; we didn't watch her all the time.—And she was so plausible.— She had dropped her glass of water—had broken the glass in pieces.—The nurse swept them up.— But she forgot one thing.—She didn't fit the pieces together to see whether they were all there.—So she didn't know that one piece was missing, a long thick triangle of glass with an edge like a razor.— Then yesterday, in the late afternoon, Mrs. Fergus-

son seemed to be sleeping peacefully—she hadn't slept at all the night before—and the nurse slipped out of the room for a few minutes.—When she came back, she found——"

He hesitated. The lines on his face deepened; he looked as if he had been cut out of stone—set, hard, frightened—if he could be frightened, by the memory of something horrible.

He lifted his right hand and drew his outstretched fore-finger across his throat.

I cowered back in bed. I never could bear the sight of blood, even as a boy. And from what he had suggested, I imagined—Lord, I can't write it in words, even now.

"Dead?" I whispered.

He seemed to come to life again, all of a sudden.

"Dying," he muttered. "She's lost too much blood.—She won't get through the night."

"So you were beaten, after all." I don't know why I said that. The words were scarcely out of my mouth when I felt embarrassed and sorry. He nodded.

"Almost," he answered.

"You mean she may get well, after all?" I interposed, puzzled by the way in which he had suddenly squared his shoulders, as if he were pulling himself together for a fight.

"I mean she may get well, before she dies. It happens sometimes in cases like this. Just at the last the black cloud lifts from the mind; the dark

night of the soul thins out and, for a moment, the light comes. The intruder is gone. And the dying person dies—himself again.—Otherwise, the soul seems to leave the body still in the grip of the something that has tormented it, that has finally sent the body rushing down a steep place into the sea. Then the final battle is fought out, I suppose, on the other side.—You don't see it.—You can't be sure of the final outcome.—But if, as I've said——"

He stopped suddenly, leaned over the bed, and took me almost roughly by the shoulders.

"Can you pray?" he demanded, shaking me. "If you can, do. Even if you can't, at least try.—Pray—for that tortured soul downstairs. And pray—for me.—I'm not beaten yet."—He pointed to the floor at the side of my bed.—"Get down there on your knees, as soon as I'm gone.—And pray—pray."

For a moment after he had closed the door I lay there in bed, trembling like a leaf.

Pray?—What could I say, if I tried?—I ran over in my mind the old way in which our pastor used to pray on Sunday, when I was a boy, fidgeting on a hard wooden bench of our stuffy little church. "O Lord, Thou knowest that—that Mrs. Fergusson who has the room under mine—has just—has just cut——"

No, I couldn't put it into words like that.

And yet, I—a man of over fifty, shivering in my light pyjamas, and in my bare feet—got out of bed and plumped down on my knees beside it. Some-

thing that I hadn't done for nearly forty years—not since—not since my mother died.

And as I thought of that—and of her—I forgot that I was cold, that the draft from the window was blowing on my bare feet—I forgot even that I was trying to pray.

I only knew that I felt quiet, and relaxed, and peaceful. I don't know whether or not it did any good to Mrs. Fergusson downstairs. I didn't care.—Because, somehow, everything seemed all right.

Perhaps, without knowing it, I had really prayed —for the first time in my life.

CHAPTER XI

ANTIDOTES AND PALLIATIVES

I did not see my Fear-Hunter for another three days. But although I sometimes needed him badly, I realized that I ought not to bother him too much just now.—I was getting, gradually, you see, some idea of my relative importance—or rather unimportance. I had stopped thinking of how big a man I was in the business world, how much trouble I had taken and how much of my hard-earned money I was spending to come all this way from home in order to consult the most important authorities; and I had come to understand that I was only one of a lot of similar cases, nothing very interesting or important—a "patient" who was where he was for only one purpose—not for his own comfort, but simply in order to "get well."

Of course, having been "under treatment," as they call it, for over three weeks now, I felt that my time here must be drawing to a close. In another week the doctors ought to be about through with me. By then I'd have my "new teeth." And my Fear-Hunter would have finished his conferences.

I was getting able to go to sleep at night without my former foolishness, although I'll admit that there were one or two little things that I still had to do, in order to rest easily.—Like having my watch in a certain position under my pillow; and touching, at least once, all the different things on the table by my bedside. But these were details. Usually I'd fall asleep quietly while my night-attendant was in the middle of a chapter of *Pilgrim's Progress,* her low voice accompanied by the even clicking of her knitting-needles.

Miss Frolich became more and more important to me. I got to depend on her for everything. It was so simple not to have to think what I had to do next. She always knew. Whether it was medicine or hydrotherapy, or bookbinding, or "nourishment," she was always there on the dot. I could lie back and let her run my life for me. Why, a month ago I'd have had a fit if anyone had as much as suggested what I was to do and when. But now——

I had to ask her about Mrs. Fergusson. And she told me that Mrs. Fergusson had died late in the night of the same day on which I had last seen my Fear-Hunter. More than this, she couldn't or she wouldn't tell. I, also, for the first time, asked her about other patients in the house, especially about the lawyer from Florida, Mr. Phillips. It seems that he came here, given up as a hopeless case, by his home doctors; came here just to die. And he

isn't going to die, after all. The Chief and Dr. Oldham King have found out what the real trouble is, and they're fixing it. So, when I met Mr. Phillips to-day in the hydrotherapy room, I spoke to him for the first time since I've been here. You see, during the past weeks, I've been "on isolation." I haven't been allowed to speak to anyone except my own nurses and doctors. What's more, I haven't wanted to. I've been so taken up with my own troubles, so interested in myself, that I haven't cared a damn for anyone else. But to-day I broke the rules and went over to where Mr. Phillips' head, with a wet towel on it, was sticking out of the top of the electric-light bath-cabinet. I'd have liked to shake hands with him. But there was no part of him outside the cabinet to shake. And I hardly liked to pat his head. So I just said, "Hello. I'm glad to hear you're better." He grinned a weak, sweaty grin and moved his head toward the young attendant—the one who writes plays in his spare time—as much as to remind me of my "isolation." —But I didn't care.—"To Hell with the rules," I said. "I've been on isolation long enough." And the funny thing about it all was that the young play-writer didn't say "hush, hush," as he usually does. He only smiled.

Anyway I'm beginning to take an interest in my fellow sufferers.

My boy Tom has been allowed to see me three times. He's a good boy; a clever one too. It seems

that he has done so well on this summer-school job of his that he may get what he calls an instructorship, right here at the University. And he doesn't take his diploma or his degree, or whatever they call it, until next February. Then he'll be "Dr. Edwards." I never knew before that he'd be called that.—Not a real doctor, of course.—But anyway, I like the way it sounds. Everyone at home is well, Tom says. I've not been allowed any letters. And I don't miss them—now. I don't even want to hear about business matters.—They all seem so far away.—But I'll be back at work soon.—I'm well.

[That is what I thought when I wrote these notes. Shows what a fool I was—still.]

So I waited patiently for my Fear-Hunter's next visit. And at last, in the cool of a late afternoon, just toward the end of my rest period, I heard his step in the hall outside. It had been hot; I had left the door open and the minute I caught the sound of his steps on the stairs I knew, somehow, that everything was all right. There was a quick springiness about them that was so different from the way he had been walking of late. He threw down his old gray hat, jerked up the shades, and, as he came toward my bed, I saw that his face was shining.—That's the only word I know to describe it. It was sort of lighted up inside somewhere. Like that colored glass window, behind the president's chair

in the Chamber of Commerce at home, when someone turns on the electric light in the room beyond.—I didn't waste words asking questions. I knew that he'd tell me of his own accord. I just said:

"I tried."

He patted me on the shoulder.

"Of course, you did. And your prayers helped, I dare say. Anyhow, I'm sure that they helped you.—I couldn't have prayed then myself, no matter how I tried. I was too tense—too discouraged.—And then"—he gave a little sigh of contented relief—"the end came, just after midnight. She had been unconscious ever since the—the thing happened, you know.—I was in the next room with the daughter.—I didn't dare leave her.—She was dazed—terrified. You see, she had always worshiped her mother as a pattern of all that a—that the wife of a Presbyterian missionary to the Mexicans ought to be. And what her 'sainted mother' had just done seemed to her infinitely worse than fornication and adultery.—Poor, stunned, faithful little Iphigenia.—Mrs. Fergusson was gradually sinking, the nurse said. And I had about given up all hope that she would recover consciousness before she died. But a little after twelve o'clock, while the daughter and I sat together, staring at the half-open door of the room beyond, all of a sudden, in the silence, I heard a voice—a voice from that darkened room beyond—'Elizabeth, Bessie dear.'

"Miss Fergusson was on her feet in an instant.

"'My mother,' I heard her whisper, as she hurried past me, 'my mother wants me.'

"I waited just a minute, and then I tiptoed after her into the other room.

"She was sitting on the bed, with her arms about her mother, whose lined face was ghastly above the mass of white bandages that swathed her neck. But the eyes were open; the deep harsh lines around the mouth were smoothing out; the stern repressed look was gone. And in the eyes themselves the change was greatest of all. For they had lost their former sly, shifty, tormented look. And the something that had interposed itself between this woman's true self and her environment—setting a sort of impenetrable barrier between herself, her tortured self and us, who were trying in vain to help her—this something had dissolved—and had disappeared.

"She seemed to recognize me; but she was not interested in me. She lifted her blue-veined hand, and laid it, trembling, on her daughter's bowed head.

"'A good daughter, Doctor,' she said, looking up at me. 'No mother ever had a better.' Then her eyes turned to the daughter's face again. 'God bless you, my dear child,' she whispered. 'And He will bless you, I know.' After a pause, she added, 'Bessie dear, I have just been talking with your father.'

"The daughter looked up with a start. The mother's unsteady hand slipped from the girl's hair,

and the dying woman folded both hands across her breast.

"'Bessie,' she said, after a moment's pause, 'will you say the Lord's Prayer?'

"The poor child tried. But her breath caught in her throat. Then the eyes of the mother turned and caught mine.

"'Doctor,' she said—her voice was growing weaker and weaker—'you look like a good man.—Do you know the Twenty-third Psalm?'

"Well, we doctors are supposed to have no feelings—to be inured to suffering and disease and death—but, believe me, we have hearts yet—some of us. I don't know how I managed it. But strength was given to me somehow to hold my voice steady; and, thank God, I did know the '*Dominus regit me*'—'The Lord Is My Shepherd.' I said it through to the end. Mrs. Fergusson thanked me with a look; then she turned again to her daughter.

"'And now, dear,' she whispered, 'we'll say the Lord's Prayer—together.'

"I slipped out of the room. In the adjoining room, where I found the nurse in a corner blowing her nose (it is not etiquette to cry while on duty) I listened to the two voices—the younger voice of the daughter interrupted by a sob now and then and the lower, weaker tones of her mother's voice—repeating the old, old words together:

"'But—deliver us from evil.——

"There was a moment's pause. Then the daughter's voice finished the prayer alone."

As my Fear-Hunter stopped speaking and turned away toward the window, I felt a single tear trickle off the end of my nose. When he came toward me again his own eyes were shimmering.

"So, in the end," he said, with a little uncertain quaver in his voice, "in the end, we won." Then, with a puzzled look, he added, "Or, perhaps, she won. Perhaps, I ought to say, God won.—I don't know.—One gets so hopelessly tangled up sometimes.—Come on, now. Let's get to work."

He brought out his French game again. And, in spite of his having wrought me all up inside with his story about Mrs. Fergusson, I got the mercury into eleven of the fifteen holes in five minutes. This seemed to please him.

"I can't do that myself to-day," he said. And while he was trying, or pretending to try, I asked,—for, as I've said, I had begun to take a personal interest in everybody in the house:

"And how's Miss Fergusson?—Is she going back to her home?"

The Doctor gave up fussing with the rolling mercury.

"She hasn't any home to go to," he answered. "Her father had no relatives. Her mother's people she has never seen; and they are thousands of miles away.—We had to make all the arrangements for

her.—The funeral was this morning. She buried her mother here. I've just come from the cemetery. And from escorting the daughter to a—to a nunnery."

This made me jump.

"What," I protested. "A Presbyterian missionary's daughter—with Roman Catholic nuns! You're crazy."

"I dare say," the Doctor grinned. Evidently, for some reason or other, he was greatly pleased with himself. "But not necessarily Roman, you know.—Oh, they're nuns, right enough.—Friends of mine. Especially the Mother Superior.—They have a house outside of town, where they run an orphanage.—About a hundred children. Peaceful place.—Nice sensible women, too.—Nuns aren't always sensible, you see. They haven't time to be, I suppose. At any rate, it's just the place for Miss Fergusson.—She made no objection; she'd have gone anywhere I suggested.—And I did the best I could for her."

"But," I protested, "but you don't see the point. Here's her father and her mother who've spent their lives in Mexico trying to convert people from the Pope—from masses, and monasteries, and nuns, and all that.—And you go and send this poor girl to a place where she'll see nothing except the very things she's been brought up to despise—perhaps to think wicked."

The Doctor grinned happily again. He was like

a bad little boy who has just done something very naughty and is tickled to death with his own cleverness.

"That's just it," he said. "She and her family have had too much converting in their lives.—I'm only putting her in the place of the poor Mexicans.—Giving other people a chance to convert *her*. —But don't think I'm joking.—You see, this poor Iphigenia has been starved all her life—starved mentally and spiritually. While her mother was under my care I got to know the daughter quite well. She loves color and beauty; and her life has been drab and ugly. She has a strong maternal instinct; and there isn't one chance in a thousand of her having children of her own. She has great powers of self-sacrificing affection; and no one to spend it on.—Besides all of which, she has the thing we call faith.—What better place could I send her to?—She'll be thrown with a group of kindly, well-educated Christian women. She'll see their work; she'll get into touch with the children.—And those nuns have a very beautiful chapel.—Somehow, I think that there she'll find peace."

Not another word about Miss Fergusson would he say. He sat down, at last, in the old chair by my bed, and from his attitude, with both legs thrown over one arm of the chair, I knew that he meant business. So I got out my note-book. He picked up two books that he had dropped on the foot of my bed.

"Miss Frolich tells me," he began, "that you had a hard time getting through the last book I gave you, *St. John of the Cross.* Not easy reading, I admit.—However, this time I've brought you a much simpler job.—And it is most important that you do the reading that I bring you.—I can't possibly, in our conferences, cover the whole ground. If you read what I give you, then in our talks I can try to explain your difficulties, and can, as it were, apply what you have read to your own special needs.—Now, one of these books you can read straight through. *Thy Rod and Thy Staff,* it's called, written by A. C. Benson.—One of the three famous Benson brothers.—He went through a depression himself, in middle life; and afterward he wrote this book to try to help others who were suffering in the same way.—This other little volume I'll put here by your bedside.—You may have heard of it." *

I looked at the title page.—*The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis.—Somewhere, back in my boyhood, I had vague memories about a book like this.

"You know it?" the Doctor asked.

"I'm trying to remember," said I. "It seems to me that my mother had books like this.—On the table by her bed. *Daily Help for Daily Needs*—and this one.—I'm almost sure.—I remember, because our pastor, once when he came to call and she had

* See Bibliographical Note on p. 365.

quoted or told him something about this book, said to her 'that it was no book for a good Protestant to read.' And that the man who wrote it hadn't been a Methodist.—I can't recollect his exact words. But they made me curious about the book, and I went to mother's room and looked at it. I don't recall what was in it; I only remember that I was disappointed. It didn't sound bad at all."

"Then you'll do me the favor of renewing your acquaintance with Thomas à Kempis," the Doctor went on. "Not much at a time. It won't interest you. But please read one of these short chapters every night.—Only, don't misunderstand me.—I'm giving you this for the same reason that I asked you to read parts in the Bible."

"I'm getting on splendidly with your rearranged Testament," I put in. "Old Nollmeyer thinks that in a week more——"

The Doctor waved my interruption aside.

"Never mind that now.—I'm asking you to read Thomas à Kempis because he has a method of dealing with fear that you ought to become familiar with.—I'm trying to put into your hands all the weapons against fear that human hands have ever forged.—That's my job.—I can prepare you for the battle. But I can't fight it for you.—And one more request before I start on what I have to say this afternoon.—Do you memorize easily—learn things easily by heart, I mean?"

I shook my head. "Learning things by heart" had

always been terribly hard for me. I told the Doctor so.

"But," I added, "when I did once get a thing into my head, I never forgot it.—Why, to this day I can still recite that piece about 'Give me liberty or give me death.'"

"Excellent.—Then you will kindly take this book also." He pulled out of his deep pockets still another book, small, black—a prayer-book, as I found out afterward. "You'll find a mark at the Twenty-third Psalm. Now, I want you to learn that Psalm for me by heart.—You ought to know it, partially, already.—Will you do it?"

Now there are limits to everything. For the life of me I couldn't see what good it could do me to learn by heart one of the songs of old King David. I protested.

"Listen," the Doctor interposed. "The other day, I didn't tell you—didn't *order* you to pray—I only *asked* you to. And now I'm not *ordering* you to learn these few verses. I'm *asking* you, that's all."

Then, settling himself in his chair again, he went on:

"There are some diseases, you know, that come merely from wrong habits of life. If you change your habits and live or eat differently, why the illness disappears of itself. You don't need any special medicine or treatment. All you need is a new way of living.—The troubles and mental sickness that come from fear are, sometimes, of this type also.—

If you can show the patients how the fear started—what lay behind it, what reinforced it—you can help them a lot. When a woman who has had a phobia of cancer all her life and who has restricted her diet so that she is skin and bone because she has an idea that 'rough food' irritates the stomach and produces cancer there—when she can be brought to realize that her mind has been sensitized to the fear of cancer because of her distressing experiences with a beloved father who died of it—why, you have already robbed her phobia of a good deal of its nameless, overshadowing horror.—Or, with a man of your analytic, logical type of mind, if you can explain the mental machinery with which fear works, can make the man see just what has happened to him, and why, you have started him on the road to recovery.

"Psychoanalysis—that people, laymen, talk about so much nowadays—has helped many fearful people. I have known it to dissolve inhibitions and to free the mind of obsessions.—I am the last man to criticize or find fault with its methods, for I have seen some of its good results.—But so have I seen some of the good results of Christian Science. Or of the teaching of the kindly M. Coué.—And I try not to remember the bad ones.—Even among the omnipotent surgeons—who are the Olympians of our profession nowadays—there are operations that we say euphuistically have 'not been a success.'—Surgery's bright lexicon has no such word as 'fail-

ure.'—So why shouldn't a poor psychoanalyst, now and then, try a mental operation that turns out to be 'not a success'?

"However, in your case I advised against a long typical psychoanalysis. For in your case either one of two things would have happened, and both would have been 'not successes.' Either you would have become impatient after, let us say, the sixteenth two-hour session, and have gone home in a huff—half-analyzed, with the rough ends of your mind sticking out in disorder all over you; or else, you'd have become so dependent on your analyzer, and on the emotional outlet that your sessions with him afforded you, that you would not have been able to tear yourself away even after the sixtieth two-hour session (at ten dollars the hour), and would have been forced to go on being psychoanalyzed all the rest of your life.

"So I have tried to deal with your case in a simple, more direct way. How much you have been helped, I can't tell."

I started to tell him how much; but he motioned me to keep silence.

"I want you to understand," he went on, "exactly the difficult point that we have reached in our conferences.—It is a point that I always dread. Because, if I am really honest with the patient and myself, I have to disappoint him.—After all our previous talks about the causes, the mechanisms, the results of fear, you have naturally a perfect right to ask

me flatly: 'So far so good.—I know the causes, the machinery. But now that you have described the disease, isolated the bacteria that cause it, what is the cure?—Give me an antidote for fear.—Tell me how to stop being afraid?'—And when you ask me that, if I am honest I must answer: 'I know of some palliatives for fear—something that for a time will dissipate it perhaps, or hold it in check. I know of some antidotes that will, in part, relieve you of the poison that fear has spread through your body and your mind.—But a cure for fear?—Something that will put a stop to your fearing, forever?—I know nothing of that kind.—As long as you are a living, thinking man, your mind is open to fear.'—As one dear old soul once said to me, 'You tell me to stop worrying, Doctor. But, for God's sake, tell me how.' I couldn't tell her.—I knew no answer then."

"You know an answer now?" I broke in eagerly. For I may as well admit that I was terribly disappointed. I had read a lot in the papers and periodicals about psychoanalysis and the wonderful things that it could do. I didn't know what it was exactly, or how it was worked. But I had supposed that my Doctor, after he had sort of prepared my mind by his talks, would do something to my mind, or tell me something I could do myself, which would cure me of all my troubles forever. And now—according to what he'd just said—why, there *was* no cure at all. And here was I, who had come so far away

from home, given up my business, and spent so much——

At this point I mentally kicked myself. That very morning I had prided myself on having got beyond this "chain of thought"; and here I was, at it again.

But the Doctor's last words had given me a new ray of hope. He did not answer me. I put my question again:

"You've found a cure, then?"

He hesitated. I felt as if he had some secret knowledge of his own that he didn't want to give me; or perhaps something that he only guessed at, and hesitated to tell because he wasn't sure of it yet.

"Not a cure, exactly," he said slowly. "Let us say, a protection. You remember, when I was illustrating the mechanism of fear by the example of the rabbit flying in fear from the dog, that I said that the rabbit stopped being afraid as soon as it got into its burrow, where it knew the dog could not get at it. It was in a *safe place.*—If you—you with all your human inherited fears, transmitted to you as an original taint from Adam, or from an endless line of prehuman ancestors—if you can find a safe place, then the problem is solved. It seems so ridiculously simple.—Find a place, or *make* a place—create an atmosphere or prepare an environment—in which the fear-reactions can't come; or in which, if they do penetrate, they lose their power to harm.—I don't

know much about this new-fashioned radio business, but I am told that there are, in the air, places or conditions that hold up or that neutralize the air waves so that they can't pass through.—They say, for instance, that if you are in Washington, you can get New York easy enough, or even Chicago, hundreds of miles away, but that you can't get Baltimore, which is just around the corner. And the reason is—so I understand it—that between Baltimore and Washington there is some sort of a resistance in the air, some sort of a blocked space, through which waves coming from a distance can pass, but which holds up those waves that come from a station near at hand.—Now, if in your mind you could create a neutral space like that—a safe place into which the waves could pass that come from a distance, from outside yourself, from your higher self, from the best that is in you—perhaps one might say, from God (only, of course, He isn't a long way off) —but that was impenetrable by those other waves coming from the nearby of your own selfish thoughts, from the closeness of your animal life, from the part of you that you possess in common with unthinking Nature—why, then the fear-waves, those that emanate from this nearby lower element, couldn't get through to you.—There's something of the same idea in the Psalms.—Don't wrinkle up your nose. I'm NOT going to *ask* you to learn anything more by heart.—But King David was, as you may remember, a very human personality; and, at

times, he was very much afraid. And when he was afraid he thought of one safe place where fear could not reach him—the Tabernacle in which the ark of God rested (the Temple, you'll recollect from your Sunday-school lessons, hadn't then been built)—that shadowy quiet tent that enshrined for him the immediate presence of God.—He wasn't a priest; even the king, I suppose, wasn't allowed to enter that holy place. But, in his mind, in his thoughts, he would enter in there and be safe.—'Therefore, shall He hide me in His Tabernacle'; that's what he wrote in one song of his.—You see, he had found a refuge from his worries and fears. And what a lot he had—his own mistakes, plague and pestilence among his people, his dearest son's rebellion and death.—Found it, not of course in a mere tent or near a chest of wood, but in the presence of God."

The Doctor paused. He had twisted himself out of his usual flopping position in the deep armchair, and was sitting, tense, motionless, leaning forward, his hands clasped between his knees, his eyes fixed on the ground. As if he were trying—trying with all his might—to work out something in his own mind.

"I'm not clear about it all myself," he went on. "It's like getting hold of the end of a string and following it up, bit by bit, until it leads you through all sorts of turning and twisting passages. And you keep saying to yourself, 'This *can't* be right. This *can't* be the way.' And yet you have the string in

your hand and you keep following it up, wondering what you're going to see when you get round the next corner, where you see its line of white disappearing in the shadows.—I got hold of the end of this string long ago. When I first began to notice the people whom I DID NOT see at my office; the people, apparently, who did not need my help, because—because they were not afraid.—Or, if they were afraid—as all men, I think, must be at times—had found some powerful antidote—some safe place of protection and peace. It wasn't, you know, that I didn't have some fear-patients who considered themselves good Christians, who went to church regularly, and who had what they called 'faith,' although I must admit that a good three-quarters of my fear-patients had practically no religion at all. But, by a process of elimination and comparison, I made up my mind that there were, I felt sure, two types of so-called religious people, Jews as well as Christians—and I dare say Mahomedans and Buddhists too (though I never had a Buddhist patient, worse luck; the nearest thing to one was a Bahaist and she had so much religion that she had no time to practice it, it took all her time just believing it)—two types, I said, who seemed to have discovered some secret method of neutralizing the toxic properties of fear.

"I've been on the track of that secret for years. And the more I've tracked it—the—the more disappointing it seems. I mean, there appears to be noth-

ing new or striking about it, in a sense. I've been myself, like Naaman the Syrian, about whom I made you read. I was looking for the waters of Abana and Pharpar, mighty, imposing rivers of Damascus. And I nearly missed the waters of Jordan at my feet."

I was glad, then, that I had read that Bible story. It made me feel comfortable inside, whenever the Doctor referred in an offhand way to something that I'd have called "high-brow" once, and I got what he was driving at right away. My head man O'Connor—at the office at home—he wouldn't have understood him at all.

"And did you," I interposed; "did you do like Naaman? Go away mad, I mean."

"Good laddie," said the Doctor, pleased as Punch. "So you've marked, learned and inwardly digested. —No, I haven't gone away in a rage.—The trouble is this.—I think I see what the secret is. Like all big things, nothing of a secret after all.—But, if I see it, I ought to be able to make it work myself. It isn't fair to tell you to do a thing when I can't do it, or haven't tried it myself.—I'm built that way.— You know that all the manufacturing druggists, whenever they get out some new preparation or remedy—and Heaven knows they're getting out new ones all the time—send a sample of it to all the physicians in the medical directory. When I was a young man I nearly poisoned myself with these samples. I didn't feel that I had a right to try them on

my patients until I had tried them on myself.—That's what I've tried to do with this fear-secret.—And—I haven't succeeded—not yet."

He looked up at me with a sort of discouraged smile that went right to my heart. I think I'd been fond of him, in a way, before this; but from this time on I felt different.—I can't express it. But he seemed nearer to me; we understood one another better.

"Ah," he said, after a moment, "it's the old question. Can they that help others, help themselves?"

"You mentioned two kinds of people," I suggested, for it seemed to me that he was wandering from the important point; "two kinds that knew the secret."

"So I did. And yet, in a way, the two kinds are only one kind after all. Both kinds have learned the way to David's Tabernacle. And some of them seem to live constantly as if in the presence of God.—I'm rather sensitive to mental atmospheres. And men and women of this type affect me very strangely. In the Middle Ages one spoke of the 'odor of sanctity.' The bodies of the saints were supposed to give out a distinctive smell.—Well, the minds of these people, that I'm talking about, exhale a something; they are surrounded by an atmosphere that, to me, always suggests power and peace.—As an example of one kind, let's take two men whom the man in the street would never associate with what he calls religion—men, whose profession—they were both

soldiers—is supposed to involve roughness and domineering disregard of all immaterial things. Some day when you have time get Miss Frolich to ask at the lending library for the Biography of General Robert E. Lee, by his military Secretary, Colonel Marshall, and for the Life of General 'Stonewall' Jackson, written by an Englishman, Colonel Henderson. You will be as surprised, as I was when I first read these books, to see how prominent a place in the lives of these two soldiers was occupied by their religious beliefs. It was not only that they *had* a religion, or believed in it; it was that they practiced openly what they believed, and by practicing had acquired a mental habit, which is, I believe, the secret, the cure, of which I have been speaking—the habit of the presence of God.—You can't acquire a habit just by believing in some course of thought or action; you've got to practice—you've got to do or think a thing over and over again."

His voice softened, as it always did when he spoke—which was only very occasionally—of his own past experiences, as if asking pardon for obtruding himself.

"When I was a boy," he went on, "at a big boarding-school, the vice-rector—a man who had been a soldier before he took holy orders—taught us mathematics.—I remember coming upon him once in his study—where I'd gone to ask help with my geometry—sitting like a stone image and gazing at a sheet of paper. I looked over his shoulder. There was

nothing on the paper except a single figure, the number 4.—I waited, fidgeting on one foot and then the other, until he looked up and saw me. I was a rotten mathematician—I hated geometry. He knew that. Perhaps that was why he wanted me to take more interest in it. Anyhow, he pointed down at the paper before him, and said, 'I have been meditating on the glorious properties of the number 4. The number 4 is a key to the presence of God.' Of course I didn't know what he meant. I don't know exactly now. But, like Lee and Jackson, he had found a way of his own to practice that same habit that they practiced in the tent and on the battlefield.

"That's one type. One might call it the Protestant type—the type that achieves God's presence directly, as an individual, not as a member of a church. As a sort of free-lance, instead of as a soldier in an organized army. Only, of course, you sometimes find this type inside the church as well as outside it.

"The other type, which may be called the Catholic, the institutional type, if you like, believes—to put it roughly—that God reaches the soul, not only through the spiritual contact of mind on mind, but also through this material world. God, it says (I'm a poor theologian, so forgive me if I put things clumsily) God, in the Person of God the Son, took human nature—was born—of a virgin, and walked and taught on the earth in Palestine, dying, rising

from the dead, and taking with Him into Heaven the same body in which He walked on earth. So human nature—yours and mine—is enthroned at the right hand of God. But, while He was on earth, He founded a Kingdom—a community—a church—with certain laws and ordinances by which its members were connected with Himself in an intensely real manner.—Water, applied in a certain way, became the agent by which a new member was incorporated into the Kingdom and at the same time, into the Body of its King.—Moreover, He had promised to be with His subjects—His people—until the end of the world. And He associated His presence, in an intensely real, though invisible, manner with the simple material substances of Bread and Wine, so that, when one of His higher servants in the Kingdom, one of His priests, spoke certain words in the King's Name—words which the King Himself had spoken on the night before His death—the Bread became His Body; the Wine His Blood. So He was present—like David's God in the Tabernacle—only much more intimately and intensely—present on the altar in the Bread and Wine; but present also, still more intimately, in the souls and bodies of the believers, who ate the Bread, His Body, and who drank the Wine, His Blood.—If his prayers seem languid and dim, he can find new strength and new light by slipping into church, of an early morning, to kneel in the shadows, to hear Mass said, and to rest in peace in the presence—the actual localized

presence—of his Master, who is present in the very same Body in which He once healed the sick and cleansed the lepers."

I had been following as carefully as I could, taking a few notes, here and there. Naturally, at that time, most of what he said meant little to me. And what I did understand seemed illogical, impossible.

"Well," I said, after waiting for some minutes after the Doctor had finished, "that's all as may be. But—but where do I come in?"

"I was hoping," the Doctor went on, rather ill at ease, "that you would draw your own conclusions.—I've put at your disposal the sum of my own knowledge and experience. I can't go any farther. For I am not a minister—not a priest.—In the old days there were plenty of priest-physicians.—One physician even became pope.—And medical history is full of the names of men who were all the better physicians because they had once been priests, or all the more holy, more helpful priests because they had once been physicians.—Personally, I think that the Church might do worse than revive this old ideal. There are, I believe, many mental conditions that could be dealt with more satisfactorily by a physician who had the authority and the training of a minister or priest. And I am sure that many clergymen, in their parish work, might be of greater usefulness if they had some medical or psychiatric training.—But, as things stand to-day, I can't help you in this matter myself.—And yet, I will admit

that I am so anxious to help you—so determined to see you started, if possible, on the road to your safe place—that I'm taking the risk of interfering in a sphere in which my colleagues would tell me that I have no business at all."

"Your business," I interposed, "at least as I understand it, is to make me well."

"Yes, and to *keep* you so," he added. "That's the important part. It doesn't take a very clever psychiatrist to banish fear for a season.—But I've yet to find the man who has learned how to rob it of its dangers forever."

He hesitated again. I didn't know what he wanted me to say, or I'd have said it.

"Then, will you give it a trial?" he asked abruptly. "Will you take this end of the white thread that I've discovered and that I'm offering to you—take it, and follow it on, yourself?"

I nodded my head.—Just then, although I didn't realize it at the time, I'd have done anything he asked. After his discouraged remark about "those that help others not being able to help themselves," I was anxious to help him, if I could. And if he wanted me to try any old thing, why, I'd do it—for his sake.

"Good laddie," he said, sitting down on my bed and patting my shoulder.—"And you'll not forget to learn that Psalm."

"But you're not going to leave me altogether?" I asked. For I had only a vague idea of what he was

proposing. And I couldn't get along without him, even though I thought, at the time, that I was practically well.

"Oh no," he reassured me, with another pat. "You'll see me at our regular hours.—Only, during the intervening days, between my visits, I want you to see—that is—to talk with some of my friends."

"Not a bunch of other doctors," I protested. "I've had enough doctors for twenty years. I can't go explaining my case all from the beginning to new men."

"Not doctors," he said. "But—but—one or two —people I know—people—who seem to have found the secret."

"It'll have to be soon then," I answered. "I'm almost well now. I'll be ready to leave you in a few days."

"Getting restless?" the Doctor said. "A good sign. But promise me one thing—that you will see me the last thing before you leave."

I promised of course. The Doctor picked up his old felt hat. Somehow, I always hated to see him go.

"You're going to be like old Scrooge in Dickens' *Christmas Carol*.—Surely you've read that?"—(Had I? Why, my mother used to read that story to us children on the three evenings before every Christmas. Father didn't approve of it though.)—"Well, then, you will be visited, not by spirits, but by several spiritual men.—Men whom I know and trust.—

Men who seem to have that habit of mind—that mental atmosphere—that I have tried so imperfectly to describe.—And as for yourself, please put yourself in old Scrooge's receptive attitude.—But be a little critical, too.—Out of what these men can offer, I want you to choose for yourself whatever seems best to suit your own type of mind." He pulled his hat down over his eyes and began to walk limpingly across the floor, as if he were dragging something heavy after him. "I am the ghost of Marley," he said in a deep voice. "I drag my own chain.—I want you to get rid of yours."

He went toward the door. But, as was his habit, he turned for a moment on the threshold and gave me one last look-over.

"I commend to your attention," he said, "the first book in your rearranged New Testament. St. John's general letter. Especially the third chapter. —I hope, Ebenezer Scrooge, that you will profit by your visitations. I—unlike Marley's ghost—will drop in on you between times.—Only—only—don't —forget—to—learn that Psalm—by heart.—Especially, by heart."

EXTRACT FROM THE RECORDS OF THE NURSING HOME

Note by the Visiting Psychiatrist
Case of Mr. James Edwards

Mr. Edwards is showing the first symptoms of the usual rebellion. He should remain here at least one

month longer. If he insists on going, make as many difficulties as possible. If he has will enough to surmount these, allow him to pack up. But inform me. And before he leaves the house, insist—*insist* on his seeing me in the reception room downstairs.—Do not allow any new patient to engage his room. He will need it himself for a long time yet.—I am making arrangements with a physical-culture establishment downtown to have Mr. Edwards go there three times a week. But not until he has made his effort to leave us.

CHAPTER XII

MY REBELLION

As briefly as I can (for the story of my fear-hunt is drawing to a close) I want to set down here two important things that happened during the next week. One was pleasant; the other unpleasant, very.

My treatment went on as usual. The rearranged New Testament was nearly finished; and, in sewing the quires together, I had read a lot more of it, here and there, than I had ever read before. Of course, old Nollmeyer did most of the real work. But he made me feel as if it were mine. I had handled the book so often that I came to have a sort of personal affection for it. Then I had gained, in a month, nearly fifteen pounds. I was sleeping well and was even considering getting rid of my night-attendant, although I didn't like to think of what the nights might be without her presence. I had come to be great friends with the lawyer from Florida. He has got an exaggerated idea about the "wonderful power" of the doctors here; thinks they can do anything—all because they've cured him. As for myself, I'm not so sure that they know such a lot or

can do so much. My Fear-Hunter, for instance, always seems to be feeling his way along, as if he wasn't exactly sure of his road, and as if he needed me to help him.—But I'm not ungrateful, of course. —And I'm ready to admit that I never met a bigger man than the Chief.

That brings me to the first of the two things I mentioned. For I had another visit from the Chief himself.

Just as before, after he had gone over my chart, surrounded by his silent, respectful—I nearly said, adoring group of white-coated assistants—he sent them all out of the room. Then he put a good-sized book, an illustrated book, down on my bed.

"What?" said I, rather bored. I was getting tired of books. "You, too?"

"Not exactly," he answered. "I only want to show you a picture. I came across this book yesterday in my children's nursery. *Undine and Sintram.* Two fairy stories. But look here at the frontispiece. It is taken, I believe, from a famous modern painting and it is called, as you see, 'The Knight Sintram in the Valley of the Shadow.' "

I looked at the picture as the Chief held the book open before me. It wasn't a pleasant picture for children, I shouldn't think; scary, almost gruesome.—A knight, with all his old-fashioned armor on, was riding on a big white horse through a shadowy, marshy, horrid swamp or wood. And just behind his shoulder, whispering in his ear almost,

was a sort of misshapen thing, with big sloppy lips, and starey eyes and thin clawy fingers. It seemed to be trying to make the knight listen to what it was saying.—And behind it, and all around the knight, were other dim figures, more or less like the first one.—You felt, somehow, that they were not only bad—rotten—but mean and—and dirty too.—And they were all crowding round the knight, touching him on the shoulder, peering into his face, or whispering—whispering into his ears.—But he, the knight, wasn't paying any attention.—You could see his white face, framed in his armor, not new shiny armor but old, dusty and dinted. And from his face you knew that he could hear what the evil shapes around him were saying—that he could see them and could feel their clammy touch on his shoulder. But his face was set straight ahead. He was riding, quietly, straight on. And somehow you knew that he had been riding like that for a long time. For his shoulders stooped a little, and he seemed to be holding himself straight with an effort.

This is a pretty poor description of the picture. And, of course, I didn't notice all this the very first time. Heaven knows I've looked at it often enough since then. But, like an idiot, I didn't, at first, catch the important point. Why was the Chief showing me this?

"Don't you see?" he said, a little impatiently.—"Look at the man's face.—Of whom does he remind you?"

And then, all of a sudden, I saw. It was my Fear-Hunter—only younger of course—the way he must have looked twenty years ago—the way he looked sometimes even now.

"Chief," said I abruptly, calling him that, out of his name, in my excitement, "I want that picture.—Where can I get a copy of it?—I must have it.—I simply must."

(I have it to-day; a big photographic reproduction. It hangs in my study at home. And on the frame, in gold letters, I've had printed "The Fear-Hunter.")

"I thought you would be interested," the Chief went on, after giving me the information I wanted. "I don't like, as a rule, to discuss one of my colleagues with a patient. But there are exceptions to every rule. I see," he said, glancing over at the pile of books on the table by my bed, "that he is following out his favorite mode of treatment.—We others, who deal for the most part with the objective physical needs of our patients, write prescriptions and send them to a druggist who puts the various drugs together.—This friend of ours has a curious pharmacy of his own—his library. He is trying, so he tells me often, to treat mental conditions; and since a book is the product of a mental condition—the record of a human mind's activity—the right kind of a book may be applied to a mental illness, just as a definite drug is applied to some bodily need. I've watched him, in his library, thinking over some

new case, and then going from shelf to shelf, taking down a book here, marking a passage there, just as the druggist compounds a physician's prescription from his bottles and drawers and jars.—Of course, sometimes he makes mistakes.—But that does little harm; the wrong book hasn't such baleful results as the wrong drug.—However, he tries hard enough."

"Exactly," said I. "But it isn't only books with him. He uses men in the same way.—I mean he has asked me to see a number of his friends, one at a time, so that I——"

"But what for?" the Chief interrupted. "This is new to me."

I felt rather embarrassed. The Chief wasn't the kind of man that you could talk to easily about religion. So I lied—a little.

"He wants me to get—to get a certain kind of what he calls a 'mental atmosphere.' And it seems that just as he has a lot of books to make up prescriptions from, so he's got a lot of friends—different kinds of men—all good ones—ones that he approves of—and he wants me to meet them, and to—to let their mental atmospheres work on mine and—and improve it."

"Very fantastical," said the Chief. I could see that he didn't approve quite.—How could he?—When I hadn't really explained the reason for the whole thing.

The Chief, however, went away, apparently satisfied with my progress. And, among the other patients

in this house, I have acquired my own special place of honor, because I'm the only one with whom the Chief has talked—alone—for over ten minutes.

The other thing that I must set down is humiliating.

At the end of my first month I tried to escape. I can't put it more plainly than that. I told Dr. Oldham King that I was well, that I was going home in two days. It sounds easy. But it wasn't. I had no clothes. For I had been wearing an old dressing-gown around the house, and I had been in bed most of the time.—And I had no money. But I've got a will of my own. I telephoned for my son Tom. Telephoned six or seven times. It seemed almost impossible to locate him. When I did get him, he couldn't possibly come to see me for three days. He was too busy.—I tried to telegraph my home office. But the telephone operator refused to take any telegrams from the Nursing Home telephone-station. I wrote them out, and gave them to Miss Frolich, answers prepaid. But no answers came. Then I began to be suspicious. In fact I lost my temper completely. I felt that doctors and nurses were doing their best to keep me in the Home, and by underhand means too. Dr. Oldham King talked and talked, trying to persuade me to stay another month.—Another month!—I thought he was crazy. I guess I was crazy myself almost. But I wanted to get away; I couldn't stand being shut up any longer.

Well, I made myself very disagreeable. Rude to my nurse, and rude to the Doctor.—But I usually get my own way. And, finally, after I had turned the whole house upside down, I got my clothes, got a check cashed—got packed, and ready to leave, in the afternoon. I sent for my Fear-Hunter, who had not been near me for five days. Neither had he sent any of his friends to visit me. I thought he had forgotten all about me. That was one reason why I got so mad. He didn't come. I'd promised not to go without seeing him once more. But, if he wouldn't come near me, why the promise didn't hold.

At last I was ready.—I had telephoned for a taxi, and had started downstairs to get my hat that I had hung up on the rack in the lower hall, a month ago. At the foot of the stairs, just outside the reception-room, stood my Fear-Hunter. When I saw him I began to wish that I hadn't sent for him; it was going to be hard getting away now. But I was determined to go.

To my surprise he came up to me in the friendliest way, as if nothing unusual were happening.

"Sorry I couldn't come before," he said, shaking hands. Then he slipped his fingers around my wrist. "Pulse not much accelerated," he went on, half to himself.—"No marked tremor.—Face not flushed.—And"—he put his fingers on my pulse again—"blood-pressure not much increased apparently.—And yet, for the past two days, you've been

under more or less constant emotional strain. Had a lot of difficulties to overcome.—Why, a month ago, under the same circumstances, your hands would have been shaky, and you'd have been a mess.—Excellent.—I congratulate you."

I stood staring at him, my suit-case in my hand.

"I'm going home," I said sullenly. I thought he was making fun of me—being sarcastic. And that's one thing that I can't stand.

"Oh, indeed?" he answered. "Well, your taxi isn't here yet. Come into the reception-room where it's cool, and wait."

He opened the door, and I went in.—He didn't follow me, and that rather hurt my feelings. He was mad—was done with me seemingly.—In one shadowy corner a woman was sitting. As I came in she jumped up, ran to meet me, and threw her arms around my neck.

It was my wife.

And, during the next half-hour, while the taxi waited and my train went without me, this is what she told me.

That time some weeks ago, when the Chief, on his way back from New Mexico, passed through my home town and telegraphed my family doctor to meet him at the station, on the train, the doctor didn't come down to the station alone. He brought my wife with him. He wanted the Chief to see her, to speak to her. Because he, our doctor, was much worried by a little hard lump that had been grow-

ing in my wife's left breast. The Chief had seen her. And, as a result, here she was. She had arrived that same morning, and her room in the hospital was ready. For there had to be an operation, at once.

And she was terribly frightened. She clung to me, scared to death. It was cancer, she knew it was, and she would never be well again; she was going to die—die in agony. While I was comforting her, or trying to, my Fear-Hunter came in softly. Never before was I so glad to see him as I was then.

"Here," said I, pointing to my wife; "here's another patient for you."

"In this case," he answered, smiling at my wife, who smiled back through her tears (he had a smile that you couldn't help answering, no matter how you felt), "*you* are the doctor, not I.—Mrs. Edwards feels that she will be able to face anything, if you are within call.—Now, the hospital is only fifteen minutes' drive from us here.—There is no reason why, now that you are so much better, you should not visit her there—every other day. Or even oftener.—Meanwhile, you yourself can complete—your treatment——"

"But," I stammered, as my wife clung to me again, begging me not to leave her, "my room here is given up. I've sent away the nurse. I've——"

"Oh, Jim dear," my wife wailed. "You *can't* go home. I've shut up the house. I thought you were going to stay here, and so I let all the servants go."

"Don't worry, Mrs. Edwards," the Doctor inter-

posed. "I felt sure that your husband wouldn't leave.—He can walk straight back to his own room. I've just told Miss Frolich, who is still on duty, to carry back his luggage, and to unpack it again.—I kept the taxi because I thought your husband would like to drive over to the hospital with you now.—Here, Mr. Edwards, is your hat."

And so that night, instead of being on the train going west, as I had expected to be, I was back in my own room. And as I snuggled down in the comfortable bed, I was glad—glad to be there. And thankful—for my wife's sake, and my own; so thankful, indeed, that I said to myself the Psalm that I had learned to please my Fear-Hunter. In the excitement of the last two days I hadn't thought of it at all. But now that I felt like myself again—now that I had got over my restless wilful determination to get away somehow, anywhere—I relaxed, and before I'd got to the end of the Psalm, was fast asleep.

It wasn't until the next morning that I realized that I had got into bed and gone to sleep without the sight of my night-attendant and the soft click of her knitting-needles.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CASTING OUT OF FEAR

During the next month that I spent at the Nursing Home, I was much freer than I had been before. —Out every morning alone, either at a physical culture place, or visiting my wife at the hospital.—Her operation was successful. The lump was only a cyst, as they call it; a harmless thing. But she stayed on at the hospital, fascinated by the possibilities of "reducing her weight."—In the afternoons, my Fear-Hunter came. Or one of his "visitant atmospheres," as I used to call them. And it is of these four men that I must write very briefly here.

But first of all, my Fear-Hunter, in connection with my rebellious attempt to go home, gave me a lecture on the lust for change. I'm not going to write out any more of his conferences. But I've got a few notes of what he said on this subject.

"You hear a great deal," he said, "about what is commonly called a woman's 'change of life.' Some have called it the 'dangerous age.'—Dangerous to other people.—The real danger is to the woman herself. But a man has a change of life too. It is a question of the chemistry of the body. At a certain

period in the life of every man—early with some, much later in others—the chemical balance is shifted. Some of the ductless glands, that we have talked so much about, function less actively. There is no need for them any more. The one really important thing that a man has to do—though many of us neglect it criminally—is to hand on his life to the next generation—to add a new link to the long chain of his descent—instead of being the last link, the end of the chain himself.—Nature provides for this.—During youth she inoculates a man with the microbe of what we call 'love.' For love, in its emotional and physical reactions, is strikingly like an infectious fever. Anyway, in the mental sphere, it clouds the man's judgment and restricts the field of his consciousness to such an extent that, in this restricted field, there is room for only a single person. Normally, a person of the opposite sex.—For I'm not speaking now about what we call homoerotic reactions, that have for their object persons of the same sex, and which are of course, to the psychologist, as natural and as inevitable as any other reactions of the same type.—So the infected man, if he be deeply infected, knows—in the words of a novel—that without the possession of this one woman he simply cannot go on living. He sees her not as she is, but in the light of his whole life that has become restricted to the pin-point of this single female among millions of others. To use the words of the novelists again, 'She is HIS woman.' Well, she

becomes his. And—children are born, the end for which Nature arranged the whole process.—But, as the years go on, the first 'infection' passes; the man's judgment clears; although, in their relations to their wives, the judgment of some men remains clouded to the day of their death. They are the lucky, the happy ones. For meanwhile Nature, having achieved her object, no longer maintains in the body what we call the 'primacy of the genital zone.' These functions are not needed any more. And, just as in the woman, so in the man, somewhere in the forties or fifties, there comes a change in the body's chemical balance. The machinery of generation becomes of secondary importance. And just here so many men make a hideous mistake.—They feel somehow that this chemical or physical change is a loss of their complete manhood. And they run about, trying this and that remedy or drug, in order to whip into life a function that Nature no longer needs. So they are found fighting against Nature; and that means trouble always. In other words, they rebel. And, during this period of their lives, this rebellion takes on a curious double shape. They rebel against the changes in their own bodies. And, at the same time, they develop a desire for change—a perfect blinding lust for change in the circumstances of their daily lives. Almost all the pitiful tragedies that I come across in my work have taken place during this period of a man's double rebellion.

"And a great many of the so-called 'mental breakdowns'—the depressions, the excitements, the obsessions and fear—develop in a man during this same period of physical change.

"Take your own case.—When your fears began, after that first emotional shock, you were in the midst of this change.—Your body had begun its readaptation to the changed circumstances of your life, preparing the way for the placid, important period of old age—that period which we seem to dread and which is, nevertheless, the crown and achievement of our life, the goal in order to reach which we have passed through the earlier stages.—Because you were in the midst of this change, your emotional balance was much more easily upset than would have been the case during earlier years. You may not have been conscious of it, but your mind was full of rebellious thoughts; you were rebelling against the idea of 'getting old,' and at the same time you were losing interest in your daily work and were on the verge of a rebellion against your habitual environment, of a lust for change. Luckily you found your way here.—But a few days ago, when you rebelled against the routine of your treatment here and were so emotionally stirred up that you felt you must 'get away' and 'do something different' at any cost, you had a brief experience of what the lust for change can accomplish.

"I preach this over and over again to my patients. Usually my preaching comes too late.

"Let us take an imaginary case, to show you how the double rebellion works.

"Take a married, successful man, of your own age and type. His change of life has begun, and shows itself first in the purely physical sphere.—He feels, at once, that he is 'losing his manhood.' And that gives him a sense of inferiority. He rebels; he refuses to accept, like a sensible man, the changes that are the result of natural healthy causes. And, as I have said, he tries to drive his car uphill backward.—He poisons himself with drugs; he tries to remove, as well as he can, the tell-tale traces of advancing years.—And he pretends, in this way, that he is still a young man.—So he poisons his mind, too. But, after having made himself 'act young' and 'look young,' he finds that, though still 'young,' he is burdened with the daily life of an older man. He's president of some great corporation, or head of a famous legal firm, with all the routine involved, and yet he wants to feel and act like a young man of thirty.—So he rebels against his daily life. He loses interest in it. And gradually he is infected by the lust for change.

"At the office he says to himself: Here I am, doing the same thing, going through the same routine that I have gone through for the past thirty odd years.—Have I got to go on doing these same things for the rest of my life?—I'm not 'old' yet. There are still long years of life before me.—Must I sacrifice them to this same dreary round?'

"He forgets that, in this world at least, happiness and success can be achieved only by doing the same thing—the right thing—day in, day out, over and over and over again. No man or woman who aims at successful achievement can escape the burden of routine. It's a general law.—A few of the great ones—men of creative genius—may possibly escape it.—But for most of us it is law absolute. And if we kick against it, we only hurt ourselves—and worst of all, hurt those who love us as well.

"And at home, when he comes down to breakfast in the morning and looks at his wife, sitting opposite—not very carefully dressed, perhaps, he rebels again and says: 'She used to be quite a pretty girl. But look at her now.—I've sat opposite her at the breakfast table for nearly thirty years.—Have I got to go on for the rest of my life, sitting opposite her? And she's going to get even less attractive as time goes on.—Is this all that life has in store for me? For me, a comparatively young man yet? Surely there must be other possibilities—other experiences. But time flies. If I want to stop sitting opposite her at breakfast for the rest of my life, I must make a change somehow.—And I must make haste.'

"He forgets that his wife has sacrificed her girlish beauty in doing the household work when he was young and poor, or in bearing him the children of whom he is so proud. *His* boy or *his* girl.—Not *hers*.

"Or else—especially if he happens to have a

bootlegger—he begins to suspect his wife. His own 'manhood,' as he calls it, is failing.—Why should she care for *him* any more? If he himself is thinking of other women, why should not she be thinking of another man? And so the trouble begins—that sometimes ends in a bloody tragedy.

"Of course, usually the man who yields to this lust for change ruins only his own happiness, his own career. When in such a frame of mind, he is willing to sacrifice all that he has achieved in the past thirty years, simply in order 'to do something different.' If he has been a lawyer, he suddenly determines that he has always wanted to be a newspaper man, and that here lies the true sphere of his successful activity. Or, if he has been a business man, he discovers a sudden irresistible urge toward the church, or medicine.—I'm not saying that *all* such changes make for unhappiness. I knew a distinguished diplomat once who, in his fortieth year, became a priest.—A good priest, too, I dare say.—But I always suspect sudden changes—changes that upset a man's whole life, if they take place between forty and fifty-five.—A man may safely *develop* from one phase of life into another.—But that is not an unmotivated change.

"Any lawyer will tell you that nearly eighty percent of the divorces granted in this country are asked for either during the first two years of married life, or else after twenty to thirty years of marital experience. It is the change of life, in the man or

woman, together with the lust for change that accompanies it, which is responsible for so many divorces.

"If people only realized the dangers of this transition period in their lives, so much unhappiness might be avoided. It is a period of temptation, of trying and testing the material of which a man is really made; a searching-out of the foundations on which his life has been built. If he accepts the natural physical changes that advancing age brings with it—if he resists and distrusts the lust for change that seems suddenly to sweep him off his feet—then he may safely look forward to stability and peace during whatever years of life may be left for him.—At his office, in his business or profession, he will inherit, in geometric progression, the results of the routine faithful work of his youth and middle age, instead of trying to begin all over again, with something new, at forty-five or fifty, and usually making a vile mess of it. At home he will pass from the inadequate adjustments of early married life to that perfect understanding and companionship which makes the later years of some married people so marvelous, so enviable. Instead of trying to make a gallant youthful suitor out of a middle-aged man, a sort of pitiful second-class Don Juan, he will become something far nobler, far more important—a happy, proud grandfather."

This and much more was what I learned from my Doctor about the lust for change. It is the last

one of his conferences that I shall try to reconstruct from my notes. For the remaining few pages in this blank-book of mine must be given up to a brief description of my experiences with my four visitors.

On the same afternoon on which my Fear-Hunter had finished his talk about the lust for change, he came over to my bedside, just before he left, and picked up a sheet of note-paper. He tore it into four pieces.

"Here," he said; "take your pencil, and write on each of these pieces of paper the name of a book."

I stared at him stupidly. He hunted among the pile of books lying on the table by my bed, and picked out four of them.

"The titles of these four," he went on. "Go ahead. Write on one piece of paper, 'The Twenty-third Psalm.' That will represent this." He pointed to my Bible. "Then, on the next one, write *Pilgrim's Progress.*' You know *that* book, I'm sure. On the next, '*The Imitation of Christ.*' And on the last piece, '*The Book of Common Prayer.*' That's the prayer-book I gave you—this one here—out of which you learned the 'Lord Is My Shepherd,' because I like the translation of the prayer-book better than that of the King James Bible.—Have you finished?—Good.—Now I'm going to put these four papers into my old gray hat. And you are to pick out one at a time."

"But what for?—Why should I draw lots for books?"

"The books," my Doctor said, "are going to represent your four visitors. Oh, only in a general way. And as a sort of means of identification. For I don't want you to bother about their real names. Or even ask WHAT they are. In other words, I don't want you to put any labels on them. It must not make any difference to you whether one is a Lutheran or a Presbyterian, a Protestant or a Catholic, a Jew or a Christian. But each one of them holds the secret of which we have so often spoken. Each has a type of mental atmosphere which can, I think, help you. But remember; in all four of these men, it is the SAME secret, the SAME mental atmosphere. Only, each man shows some outstanding trait, some dominant note, that is peculiarly his own.—You know a little music perhaps?"

I nodded. I can pick out a tune with my right hand, and play an accompaniment in the bass consisting of three chords. I explained this to my Fear-Hunter.

"Good," he said. "Then you'll understand. The secret, the mental atmosphere, that you will find in all my four friends, is like a chord of music. Made up of four notes, or maybe more. Each note, taken by itself, may be beautiful in tone; but it is only when you combine them in a certain definite manner that you get a harmony. Now, my four friends, as I think, all sound the same harmony. But each one sounds it in a different key. And each one seems to accent one certain note of the chord, which,

somehow, you do not hear so distinctly in the harmony of the others.—Do you get my idea?—Now I want you to 'listen in' on these four soundings of the same harmony, and to pick out, if you can, what is, in each case, the accentuated note, the dominant element in the whole chord of mental music.—Talk with each of my friends, and then tell me what is the dominant note in each case—what is the element in each mental atmosphere that especially appeals to you, and that seems to answer some need, some lack of your own. But, just one serious word of warning.—Please—please don't consider these four men as if they were complete mental outfits, suits of clothes, that I was spreading out for your approval, from which you had to choose only one, while rejecting the three others as unsuitable. I don't want you to throw yourself mentally into the arms of any one of these men. Later on, when you have yourself achieved the secret, when you have built up your own mental atmosphere, have picked out the notes of your own chord and have been able to sound them together in harmony, then—if you like—make any choice you please between the systems of thought and practice represented by my four friends, or by any others that you may find more suitable still to your own peculiarities of thought or belief.—But not now; not yet.—And therefore I am going to put one command upon you, which I hope you won't transgress.—When my friends come to see you, ask them anything you like except one

thing. Don't ask them WHAT they are. One may be a Methodist clergyman; another, a Roman Catholic monsignor. But that does not concern you at all, just now.—I forbid you to tack on any labels or tags from this material world of ours to the four mental harmonies that I want you to hear."

He held out to me his old gray felt hat, and I drew from it, one at a time, the four slips of paper that it contained. My Fear-Hunter took them from me, keeping them in the order in which I had drawn them.

"Your first visitant," he said as he went toward the door, "will be the man whom I associate, somehow, with the book, the title of which you have written on this first slip—*'Pilgrim's Progress.'*"

The next afternoon my visitations began. The process was always the same. My Doctor would bring with him, in the afternoon, one of his friends, would introduce him to me and then leave us to talk together. Some of these visitors came several times, before I could safely answer my Fear-Hunter's question. For every other day after the visitations had begun, he would drop in, and standing beside my bed, would ask me, "Have you found the dominant note? Have you caught the harmony of the whole chord?" If I said "No," he went away, and I had another visit from the particular "harmony" or "mental atmosphere" that was coming to see me at that time. Finally I would say, "I'm ready." And then I would give him my answer, as

best I could. It wasn't always easy. But it was very interesting.

Immediately after my Fear-Hunter's last visit, when we had drawn the papers from his hat, I put *Pilgrim's Progress* on the top of my pile of books, and, as soon as I got a chance, began to read it all over again, from the very beginning. I was in the middle of Christian's encounter with the chained lions, when my first visitor appeared. He was a big powerful man, of about middle age, rather careless about his dress, and not very particular in his use of English. You got the idea that he considered such things as clothes, manners of speech, and all the little conventionalities of life, to be unimportant, external—unessential.

It was as if he had gradually shucked off the unessential things of life, as we used to shuck the silk and leaves from an ear of corn when I was a boy on the farm. I thought that perhaps he threw away some things that might just as well have been retained, and that might have made life a little more pleasant and amusing. But you couldn't help being impressed by the way in which he had stripped himself of everything that he felt might be an impediment in reaching his goal. There was a directness, a simple strength in his way of looking at religious things that impressed me. I don't know how to express it exactly, but there was a "punch" in his religion. He hit you with it, hit you hard. And he didn't mind whether he hurt you or not, so

long as he got you to pay attention to him. But more remarkable still was the sort of easy familiarity with which he talked about religious matters. I myself had caught from my Fear-Hunter some of his dodging dislike for irreverence in the use of sacred things and names. But in the case of this first visitor there was no irreverence at all. Yet he seemed to be so familiar—if I may say so—with God, that he made his beliefs seem intensely real.—There was about him a straightforwardness, a simplicity, a matter-of-factness, that did really remind me of *Pilgrim's Progress* at once.

He came to see me three times. And I must confess that, except for the first five minutes of his first visit, he "talked religion" all the time. I had met men something like him before, when I was a boy, among our own Methodist ministers; but never a man who seemed to have such intense earnestness.

After his last visit I told my Doctor that I thought I understood why he had wanted me to meet this man.

"You may laugh," I said, "but he reminds me constantly of a fighter, trained down to the last ounce of fat, and stripped of all unnecessary clothing, ready to put every atom of his strength behind every punch.—And yet at the same time, in religious matters, he's almost like an unfrightened child in his familiarity with sacred things."

My Fear-Hunter seemed pleased.

"You've struck it, I believe," he said. "So many

people are offended by just this apparent familiarity. And I feared that you might be offended also. But in this case, the dominant note is that closeness to the things of God, which makes those same things as real and as simple as the most trivial affairs of everyday life.—More real, as a matter of fact.—This man needs make no effort to enter the straight gate that leads to the presence of God; he knows the road so well, he has trodden it so many times, that one might say he is, as it were, inside the gate all the time. Yet there is nothing mystical about his religion. It is plain matter-of-fact stuff that will stand all sorts of wear and tear.—From the beginning of our conferences, I have tried to impress on you the importance of being able to talk of religious matters in a simple direct way—being familiar with them without being irreverent.—If you will combine the atmosphere of *Pilgrim's Progress* with what you have learned from this first visitor, you will soon be able yourself to sound that note in the chord of your own religious life that you have heard dominating the harmony which the life of this man must make in the ears of God."

As he left the room he took out a piece of paper from his waistcoat pocket.

"The second title that you drew by lot," he said, "was the 'Twenty-third Psalm.' The man who is coming to see you to-day may be said to represent a great deal more than that. His mental atmosphere covers everything from the first verse of the

first chapter of Genesis to the last verse of the Prophet Malachi."

This second visitor I did not like very much, at first. Just why I have always disliked the Hebrew people, I can't say. But it has always been instinctive with me. And at the first glance I knew that this visitor was a Jew. He was a very slight old man, with a silken gray beard that scarcely concealed the outlines of his face. Whenever he was excited his black eyes shone like the melting iron in a blast furnace; and he had the most wonderful tapering, thin hands that I've ever seen. But he had not been with me half an hour before I forgot altogether that he was a Jew. He had been told, he said, by his friend, my physician, that I was somewhat interested in ancient Hebrew poetry—especially in a song of King David's, which, he said, in our sacred books was numbered the twenty-third.—He would, if I cared to listen, recite it to me in Hebrew.

Of course I didn't understand. But after reciting it, he began to comment on it; to tell me what one great rabbi had written about it, over a thousand years ago, and what another very learned scholar of modern times had taught. It was wonderful. Word for word he commented and explained. Until I seemed to see the simple life of the country in Palestine, with the shepherds, and their flocks, lying out in the dark night in some terrible storm; or watching the morning break safely at last, and bow-

ing down in spirit before the Lord God of Israel, who ruled the tempest, and whose glory the morning heavens declared.

I knew very soon, of course, that this second visitor must be some great Hebrew scholar or rabbi. And yet he never tried to overwhelm me with his learning. He simply opened his treasures and poured them out before me, as if I were another scholar like himself. And there was about him an Old World courtesy, a poise, a refinement, that I have never forgotten. He visited me four times. When I asked him, he expounded Psalms and historical passages from the Old Testament for me. Or else he told me of how his ancestors had lived in the Middle Ages; how many of them live in some Christian countries to-day. Never a word of complaint; merely a statement of fact. He seemed to be far above all such petty things as injustice, persecution or death. There was something about him that seemed everlasting—permanent—that would go on and on, when I and other little men like me were dead and forgotten.

All this I tried to tell my Doctor, when this second visitor had bade me a final good-by.

"I can't get the right word to explain what you call the dominant note in this second friend of yours," I said.

"You've got the idea anyhow," he answered. "And I think that the word you want is majesty, or perhaps better, awe.—Almost the opposite of that

familiarity with things holy which you picked out in your first visitor. One is the necessary corrective of the other. Without awe and reverence, familiarity deteriorates into license. Without them, there is no real attainment of the secret. My dear old friend, the rabbi, strikes that note distinctly. It is struck over and over again, for us Christians, when we say: 'Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of Heaven'—and when we join ourselves in spirit to the whole creation, prostrate before the throne of God, repeating Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts——"

My Fear-Hunter stopped abruptly, as he always did when he feared that he might be imposing upon me some element in his own faith that I might not understand.

"Well," he said, picking up his gray hat, "we've done fairly well so far.—The note of close familiarity with things divine, and the note of reverent awe. —Of course, we might go on endlessly. For, in the harmony of the love of God, there are more than four notes. So don't imagine that when you have met all my four friends that you will then have exhausted every possibility of the Christian inner life. However, let's see who comes next."—Another paper came out of his waistcoat pocket.—"*'The Imitation of Christ.'*—Ah, I rather envy you your meeting with the man who, to my mind, somehow represents the book of Thomas à Kempis."

After hearing that I was looking forward to some-

thing unusual. But I was disappointed, at least at first, although not antagonistic as I had been in the beginning to my second visitor. This third one was a very commonplace-looking man; he must have been some kind of a clergyman, for he wore a round collar. He couldn't have been much over thirty. Just an ordinary American—the kind that are turned out by the colleges and univerities by the thousands. And he talked that precise, careful Eastern English, with its broad "a," that my boy Tom has acquired since he came East to study. Why my Fear-Hunter should ever have connected this every-day-looking young man with a book of devotion like the *Imitation,* I couldn't imagine.

It was only very slowly that I began to understand. For this third visitor came to see me every day for over a week. And yet when I thought over the things he said, I couldn't get much out of his words alone. It was a something behind the words —a sort of light that shone out suddenly from somewhere far back in his mind or his soul, and that lightened up his whole face, until the features, that had seemed so commonplace, stood out in a kind of glory. At first he was very shy; we talked about ordinary things. I did not feel as if I were getting at his real self at all. Finally, during his second visit, I showed him my little copy of the *Imitation,* and asked him to read aloud and to explain some chapters that I pretended not to have understood.

While he read, I watched him from my bed. And then I saw the transformation. Every now and then he would lay down the book, and sigh and say:

"The English translation doesn't give the fervor, the fire of this passage. Listen to how it goes in the original Latin."

And then he would recite a long passage in Latin. And his eyes would glow, and his face light up.

With him I got the dominant note easily. But I enjoyed his visits so much that I kept putting my Doctor off when he came with his questions. But at last I had to meet him with an answer.

"It's a note," I said, "that needs a lot of words to describe it. Fire—devotion—the joy of self-sacrifice—a sacrifice that is really no sacrifice at all, because by sacrificing something of comparative unimportance, the man has attained to something beyond all values.—Why, that man is on fire with the love of God. He keeps it shut off from the world, as he walks among men; but, at a word—the right word—it will flame out as if it were going to burn him up. It is wonderful."

I took up my copy of *The Imitation of Christ* from the table by my bedside. The book opened itself at a certain chapter.

"If you could only hear him read this," I went on. "Often he'll give me the Latin version of it. And I remember enough of my high-school Latin to follow it, partially anyway. After he has left me, certain sentences or phrases stick in my mind. It is

as if he had lighted them up with the fire of his own devotion, so that when I repeat them to myself they seem to shine out against the dull background of my everyday thoughts."

And I read a sentence, here and there.

> Nothing is better than love, nothing higher, nothing wider; because love is born of God and cannot rest except in Him. Love feels no burden, pleads no excuse of impossibility, but attempts what is above its strength, for it thinks all things possible. Though weary, love is not tired; though alarmed, it is not terrified. He that loveth, is free and not bound.

"I've even got the Latin words, of a phrase or two. Your friend wrote them down for me. *Liber est, et non tenetur*—'Free and not bound.' Or better yet, *Territus, non conturbatur*—'Though alarmed, or scared, love is not terrified; it knows no fear.' "

My Doctor stood looking at me in silence. It wasn't usual for me to get so worked up over a book.

"I think," he said at last, "that I'll break my rule about tags and labels. It's only fair that you should know something about this third visitor of yours. It can't do any harm; for probably you will never see him again.—He comes of an old, a very old Massachusetts family. If you go to Boston, you will see a number of his direct ancestors standing, in bronze, in the public gardens, or riding on bronze

horses on Commonwealth Avenue. Ever since there was a Boston to live in they have been a prominent part of it, as wealthy merchants (in the old Boston directories the merchants were always listed first, you know), as professional men, lawyers, physicians, or stern Calvinistic ministers of the Puritan gospel. Well, this friend of mine did all the things that he was expected to do—up to a certain point. He graduated from Harvard University, as all his forebears had done; he became a member of the same club to which his great-grandfather had belonged; he went, occasionally, to the Unitarian Church. But then, to the consternation of all his relations, he suddenly stopped doing the things he was expected to do, and began to do things that no member of his family ought ever to have done, under any circumstances. One day, without the slightest warning, he informed his staid old grandfather that he had been received into the Roman Catholic Church. That was bad enough, Heaven knows. His great-aunt, when she went to her sewing-circle—to which she had gone every Thursday since she was sixteen—tapped slightly on her forehead with her thin blue-veined fingers when asked about her great-nephew, and intimated that every Boston family of any distinction had at least one member under restraint in some State institution. But worse was to come. For, after all, my friend might have been a Roman Catholic, and have still continued to live on Beacon Street. But his next step was to enter

a monastery, as a Franciscan novice.—Then his family gave him up altogether. But, as you have seen, he is happy. He was, for several years, at Assisi. I met him there, by chance. For he was sent to show me around the church of the Portiuncula, down in the plain, below the Assisi walls. Now he is attached to some community of his Order here. —How—why—it all happened, I don't know.—But somewhere—somehow—some sort of a call reached him. And although, like the young man in the Gospels, he had 'great possessions,' yet when the Master looked upon him and loved him, he did not turn his back sorrowfully and go away."

A silence fell between us. I put my copy of the *Imitation* back on my table, very softly, as if I were in church, afraid to make a noise. Finally, my Fear-Hunter gave himself a sort of a shake, and came back to earth.

"Only one of the four slips of paper remains," he began abruptly. "The one on which you wrote *'The Book of Common Prayer.'* That book there." He pointed to a book that lay open on my table.

"Yes," said I. "I was reading a bit in it to-day. Toward the back of the book, it was.—I got interested in what it calls 'The Receipt for Manufacturing Priests and Bishops.' I never knew how they were made before."

My Fear-Hunter grinned behind his hand. But I saw him.

"I put this book on one of your slips," he

explained, becoming serious with an apparent effort, "because it also represents a type of mental atmosphere. And those men and women who have been able to develop it, at its best, are also men and women who seem to possess the secret of which you and I have spoken so often. It has been sometimes criticized as a rarefied, very dry kind of atmosphere, in which the free expression of religious feelings is repressed, and finally killed. But it has produced some very remarkable specimens of religious consciousness. And one of these specimens I want you to see. He happens to be a very busy man. It is only because this Nursing Home lies midway between his office and his home that I can persuade him to stop here on his way uptown to-morrow.— I won't say anything more. Good-by."

Now, after hearing all this about a man's office and his busyness, naturally I expected to see a business man. So I was not only surprised but very much embarrassed, when a very tall, distinguished-looking person walked in next afternoon, dressed in black, with a round clergyman's collar, and a funny kind of a black silk vest that didn't stop where vests usually do, but reached down as far as the man's knees. Around his neck he had a gold chain, which ended in one of the pockets of this vest. At first I thought it must be attached to some kind of a fountain pen. But, as he stooped over my bed, I saw that the chain was fastened to the top of a big gold cross. This was all new to me, you know.

And rather disturbing. I wasn't at ease as I had been with my other visitors.

But when this old gentleman sat down by my bed, and I got a good look at him, I felt better. His face, clean-shaven and full of deep lines, was like those faces of old Romans that we used to have pictures of at the back of our history-books in high school. I've seen a few business men with faces like that—big men, men of great executive power, men who had built up huge organizations and who carried immense responsibilities. But their faces very often were hard. You felt glad that you were on their side, and not on the side that they were trying to, and were surely going to smash into a thousand pieces. This fourth visitor of mine wasn't hard like that. There was kindness back of those clean-cut features of his. And the minute he began to speak you felt as if you were the one man in all the world that he was most interested in and wanted most to talk to.

He knew my part of the world. He was interested in labor conditions out there, and he knew what he was talking about too. Then we drifted off to other things. And, since my Fear-Hunter had told me that he represented *The Book of Common Prayer,* why I asked him about that receipt for making priests and bishops that I had been reading. He was very interesting. He told me a lot of things about the apostles, and about the early Christians, that I'd never heard before. Then he took the book,

and read me a piece out of it, called "Evening Prayer." It was pretty long. Even at that, he said that he had left out some of it.—But I liked it.—It was restful. And there was one prayer, about "Lighten Our Darkness," that I took a great fancy to. I made him turn down the leaf where the prayer was. I'll learn it, I think.—For you see, my own darkness hasn't had much light in it, these past nine months.

Anyway, this fourth visitor came twice. And he did something that the others hadn't thought of doing, or perhaps couldn't do. He asked me to come and see him, sometime, at his office downtown. That made me feel as if I could get at him if I wanted him.

After he had gone, after this second visit, my Fear-Hunter came dashing in, rather excited.

"So," he said, "so you've interested him enough to make him come a second time. It isn't often that the bishop——"

He put his hand up to his mouth as if he'd made a bad mistake. But I had heard him.

"Then that's what he is, is it?" I interrupted. "Who's putting on tags and labels now?—But it doesn't make any difference.—Whatever he is, I'll bet he's good at it. And I'm mighty glad to have seen him."

"You may well be," said my Fear-Hunter slowly. "For you've seen something that people nowadays don't see very often. Not a reed shaken by the

wind—like some of his episcopal colleagues. Nor yet a man clothed in soft raiment—like so many others. But a bishop—a something more than a bishop. You've seen a thing that doesn't grow very often in the soil of the English Church. A prelate—a great churchman—a man who, in sheer executive ability, could hold his own with many a business magnate; and, at the same time, a man of God, whose heart is bigger than his diocese, and who is beloved of rich and poor alike, because he cares nothing for either poor or rich, but only for immortal souls."

"He blessed me," I stammered, feeling a little embarrassed.

My Doctor nodded.

"Yes," he said. "He would. He does that to everyone."

"It surprised me at first," I went on. "It came so suddenly. I was just sitting here in bed, you know. I didn't have time to get down on my knees or—or anything like that.—I can't explain exactly how it made me feel.—It was as if something—something restful and strong—went out from him and—and rested on me.—It was silly, I suppose; but I got to thinking—thinking about—about my mother. About one night when I was a boy and got terribly frightened. She quieted me. She told me how her love could reach out anywhere and could surround and protect me. I don't know what put the memory of that night into my head, but——"

"*I* know," said the Doctor. He turned to me with a sudden light of kindness and of interest in his eyes. "Now I feel sure that I have been a good guide. You're on the right road at last."

He paused for an instant, as if trying to make up his mind.

"Some day before we separate," he said finally, "I think that I may tell you something about my own mother. I would rather that what I want to suggest had come from one of your four visitants. But, if they've not given you the line of thought that I have in mind, why, I must try and do it myself.—Only not now.—But before I leave you this afternoon, tell me what this fourth visitor meant to you."

I thought carefully for a moment. The words were hard to find.

"Dignity," said I "is the word I want, I think. Dignity and order. And a way of doing and thinking things that has been handed down from very long ago, a way that has been tried out by others during many, many years, and has been found by experience, and maybe by repetition, to be more satisfactory than if everybody did or thought in their own manner, one way to-day and another to-morrow. You can get too much of it, I suppose. But the right corrective would be a little of the familiarity and freedom that I learned from my first visitor.—Besides, because of this dignity and this order, there is a sense of power."

"Good," said my Fear-Hunter. "But don't forget that back of the order, and the dignity, and the power, is the old secret, the habit of the presence of God. And that that habit of the presence only becomes possible through the love of God, without which there is neither order nor dignity, presence nor power of any abiding usefulness or value."

With that he was gone.

I had expected to see him very often again. But, as it happened, our next meeting was the last one. And it did not take place for some time.

You see, I did as the Bishop asked and went to see him at his office. There I met a young clergyman, with a big parish in the very poorest part of the town, who carried me off to look at it. It was a large plant; a parish house with all sorts of rooms for boys' clubs and women's meetings; a clergy house, where the five or six ministers lived; a mission for colored people, and lots of other things. And, of course, a church, which was, so the rector told me, the power-house of the plant. Well, I became so interested in the social work, especially in the men's clubs and in some prison work too, that I wanted to go and live at the Clergy House. I proposed this with much misgiving to Dr. Oldham King. To my surprise, he heartily approved it. And I was packed out of the Nursing Home in short order. According to Dr. Oldham King, my stay at the Clergy House was to be what he called my "after-cure," the time that ought to come in between

the cure itself and the return of the patient to his ordinary life.

I do not intend to burden the pages of this book with my experiences at the Clergy House in the slums of a big city. I started out to write the story of my fears. And now I have come to the place where my fears had lost their power to harm. My Fear-Hunter had gradually cleared my mind of the worst of them. Then, thanks to his friends, my four visitants, I had caught a glimpse of what my Fear-Hunter had called the secret. I had at least learned that there was a place—or a state of being—in which no fears could reach me at all. Or in which they were powerless to poison my life and to make it utterly wretched. How I got further knowledge of the secret, and how I worked my way slowly and with difficulty to the place, does not belong here. For every man and woman must learn that for himself.

CHAPTER XIV

PERFECT LOVE

I CAN give no really satisfactory title to this last chapter. Yet the experiences that it describes are cut so deeply into my mind that now scarcely a day goes by on which I do not think of them. What happened is soon told.

I had been at the Clergy House for about three weeks. In the mornings I would visit my wife at the hospital, or go to the physical-culture place. I was eating and sleeping well. My interest in everything was fresh and vivid. I felt as if I had somehow started my life all over again.

I had not seen my Fear-Hunter since I left the Nursing Home. I had kept telling myself that I ought to look him up; but I was busy, and the Nursing Home was at the other end of the city from where I was living. So I kept postponing it. One sunny afternoon in October—a soft Indian-summer day—I was sitting on a bench in front of the old church. The church stands on a sort of a tongue of land that stretches out to a point made by two streets that converge, and meet at the apex of the green triangle of grass in which the church is

built. Down near the street, but inside the rails of the church land, is an old iron bench—a favorite seat of mine, especially of a pleasant afternoon. Here you can watch all the hurry and wretchedness of the city's life go by, and yet feel that you yourself are somehow cut off and protected from it.

One of our clergy drove up in his old rattling Ford. And as he stepped out of it, he was followed by another figure, whose gray felt hat looked familiar. It was, of course, my Fear-Hunter. I waved to him. He came at once and sat down beside me.

"You live a long way off, these days," he began. I started to apologize for not having come to see him; but he cut me short.

"I haven't such a lot of time," he went on, "and yet I felt that I wanted to bid you good-by. For I'm off on my belated Summer's holiday to-morrow, But I couldn't go without seeing you.—Don't interrupt me.—I know slightly some of the men in there." He waved his hand toward the Clergy House. "And they tell me how much interest you are taking in the social side of their work. This has been a great thing for you. It has given you exactly the new interest that you needed. But somehow I am not quite satisfied. I tried to bring you into contact with four men, all of whom possessed an attitude of mind that I wanted you to understand, even if you could not imitate it. You were very coöperative. You seemed to get something from

each one of them. And yet, as I say, I am not satisfied.—You may enjoy all this social work in which you are helping—the men's clubs and all that. But unless you understand, not WHAT these clergy here are doing, but WHY they are doing it, you will not have reached any sure foundation. And I shall not feel that I have helped you in a permanent way."

"But what do you want me to do?" I asked, puzzled. I had thought that he would have been very pleased with me.

"It is so hard to put into words," my Doctor answered, twisting his old hat in his hands. "The reason that these clerical friends of yours give up comfortable parishes and work here, day and night, among the poor, isn't primarily because they want to help the poor. Their primary motive is the love of God. And until you get the idea of that—until you can understand the constraining power of God's love toward us, and the reaction that it sets up or ought to set up within us—until then, you aren't on the road to complete safety from your fears; you haven't really seen the whole glory of the secret. I thought of bringing you—poor book-slave that I am—a poem called 'The Hound of Heaven,' which illustrates most wonderfully what I'm trying to say.—But—you wouldn't understand it.—Not one man in a thousand does, anyway.—No. I've got to tell you what I'm driving at in some plainer way.—And to do it I've got to do the thing that I hate most—to talk about myself."

My heart gave a leap. At last I was going to hear something interesting about his past life. But, in a way, I was to be disappointed.

"The last time I saw you," he began, "you spoke of your mother, and of an experience of your boyhood in which her love seemed to protect you. I have been luckier than you in one thing; my mother is still living. And it is of her love—of mother love, that is, in some ways, so like the love of God that I want to speak.—I was her only son. And her love for me, although I seldom realized it, has been the most powerful force in my life. When I was a young man I didn't understand it. I don't think, God forgive me, that I even wanted it very much. You see, it kept standing in my way. For in those days I was a good deal of a rebel. I wanted to go my own way, to live as I pleased. And my mother, naturally, wanted me to go her way, and to live as she thought right.—Her way, mind you, was the best way for me—the only right way. Only, when I was in the flush of my early selfishness, it wasn't *my* way.—Well, of course, she never said much. Probably she prayed a lot for me. She must have. Or I shouldn't be here now.—But she let me go my own way; she couldn't help that, for I was a free agent, I had the power of choice, and—I chose the road that wasn't hers."

He stopped, hesitated, as if seeking for the right words. Then he went on, more slowly:

"On that road of mine—the road I chose against

her will—I—I fell among thieves. Lots of men travel that road all their lives and seem perfectly safe. But perhaps I wasn't strong enough, or clever enough. Anyhow, I was attacked and robbed —robbed by people whom I had thought my friends. And left for dead.—For socially and morally dead.— I was unconscious—dazed by the many blows that had been showered upon me. When I got my wits together again, I found that my mother was sitting beside me. I didn't have to get up and walk all the long way home, as the Prodigal Son did, in order to reach his father and his forgiveness. I didn't go home to my mother; she came out from home to me, where I lay, broken and despairing, by the roadside. And she didn't reproach me; she didn't tell me that I must turn back, or point out that I had made a mistake. She just stayed there beside me.—But I knew that she had suffered quite as much as I had, if not more; and I knew also that it had been my own wilfulness that had caused her suffering.—So I —still speaking in parables—I pulled myself together, with her help, mind you—with her help; and then I started off again on my own road—on that same road of wilfulness and rebellion on which I had come to such disaster.—She didn't move to follow me. Indeed, I knew that she couldn't follow me, because this wasn't *her* road, the road that she thought right. But I knew, also, that if I met new misfortunes, if I was defeated and brought low

again, she would come to me, wherever I lay—would try to bind up my wounds and set me on my feet again, even if that meant my leaving her once more. And I realized that, if I did that—if I went on my own road and made her come to me when I was in trouble, I should hurt her—I should wound her love again. Although I could not kill it. Of that I was sure.

"And so—I—I surrendered to her love. It had beaten me.

"And after that, oftentimes I would see my own road, stretching in front of me and calling, calling to me. I might start to answer its call; I might even go a few feet down it. But then I'd stop and come back. My reason for coming back was, I suppose, a reason that many men would call weak and sentimental. But I knew that if I persisted in going on my own dangerous, rebellious way, I should make my mother suffer—I should hurt her love; and I was—I was ashamed to do that any more. I had done it so often before. Yet she had never reproached me. She had merely come out to me when I was in trouble and needed her. And because I had hurt her so often in the past, why I simply hadn't the courage to hurt her again. It didn't seem fair, somehow. It wasn't playing the game.—This sounds priggish, I know. But it wasn't the kind of thing a gentleman—a man with my forebears and traditions—ought to do.

"In the end, you see, her love conquered my wilfulness. Not by preaching at me or by reproaching me, but simply by going on loving me.

"So, now, I go *her* way. Sometimes I rebel. But I go on just the same. Her love, as the Bible says, 'constrains me.' And when she dies, I suppose that it will go on constraining me still."

His voice trailed off into silence. I waited.

"I've told you all this," he continued, "because it seems to me that my mother's love, or any mother's love, must work according to the same laws as the love of God. There is something about the thought of God's love watching around us, and waiting, waiting so patiently for our answer, that touches our sense of fair play. If we believe that it exists, this love of God for us, then we've *got* to answer it, if we are to maintain the traditions of fairness, of honest dealing—I might almost say, of good sportsmanship—in which we have been brought up."

It seemed a strange way of putting it. But I understood what he was trying to get at. It appealed to me.

"It's good of you to take all this trouble with me," I said. "I get your idea, I think.—I remember a picture that used to hang in our 'best parlor' at the farm. A picture of Christ, with a lantern in His hand.—You could see the print of the nail in the hand that held the lantern. And He was knocking at a door. His head was bent forward, as if

He were listening for the very faintest whisper from behind the closed door. But the door didn't open. It was all overgrown with weeds and vines. And His other hand—with the wound in it—was tapping, tapping gently, as if He were always hoping that the next tap would be heard inside. I used to look at that picture often. Of course I didn't understand much about it then. But it always made me sad, for He seemed to have been waiting outside such a long time. I used to wonder why He didn't reach out, and open the door Himself."

My Fear-Hunter's face lit up with one of his rare smiles.

"Don't you know why?" he asked softly.—"Let me tell you then.—That picture was painted by a very great artist. When it was first exhibited the critics were all studying it. And one of them said to the artist: 'You seem to have made one curious omission. About the door, I mean. There is no latch or handle on it.' 'No,' said the artist, 'that is not an omission. I could not paint a handle or a latch on that door. Because the latch is on the inside.'—Do you understand?—He who waits and knocks without cannot or will not open the door. The door can only be opened from the inside; the latch can only be lifted by the inmate, when he has at last heard the Master's knock. And the artist was trying to express in a great picture just what I have been trying to say in these halting words of mine.—That if you believe in the real presence of

that waiting figure, standing outside and patiently knocking, why then, not to open—not to put out your hand and lift the latch—isn't fair. No man with any sense of justice and fair play would let Him knock—and knock in vain. Especially—if you—if you remember the wounds in the hand that knocks so patiently."

I had never seen my Fear-Hunter in a mood like this. Never before had I caught so clear a glimpse of his inmost thoughts. I wondered how long it would be before he would snap out of it into his usual quick, incisive way of thinking and speaking. I feared to interrupt him.

"That's why," he said abruptly, without any apparent connection with the picture that he had just been talking about, "that's why the crucifix, the material representation of Calvary, had, in the Middle Ages, such a tremendous, personal appeal. It was the crucifix and the realization of what it meant that turned St. Francis of Assisi from the world to God, that changed him, in a moment, from a careless young man of fashion to a man aflame with the love of his Master.—I'd like to make you feel that, if I could. But it is so hard nowadays.—The appeal doesn't reach us with the same force somehow.—Lend me a piece of paper, will you?"

I stared at him in surprise. But I was used to his sudden changes. I took from my pocket a bundle of old letters and gave him one of the envelopes.

"This will do nicely," he said, turning the

envelope face downward on his knee. "I want to write out something for you. It isn't very long. And it expresses the appeal that men used to find in the crucifix better than anything else I know. It was written by another St. Francis—the Jesuit Francis Xavier—the great missionary to India. He wrote it in Latin. But you told me that you remembered enough from your high-school days to understand some phrases from *The Imitation of Christ*. And this hymn of St. Francis Xavier is written in such simple Latin that a schoolboy could translate it at sight. Besides it is easy to remember, because, unlike most Latin poetry, it rhymes. And the meter is easy too. The same meter that is used in what people call the Doxology—'Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow.'—I'll write the hymn out for you, line by line.—I won't ask you to learn it by heart"—he gave me a quizzical sidelong glance, remembering my efforts at memorizing—"because, if you understand it, you won't ever forget it. At least some lines will stick I'm sure."

So, in his clear, copper-plate hand, he began to write on the back of the old envelope, explaining and translating as he went along:

"O Deus, ego amo te.
Nec amo te, ut salves me,
Aut quia non amantes te
Aeterno punis igne.

"In our Hymnal there's a very imperfect translation of this hymn which begins:

"O God, I love Thee, not because
I hope for heaven thereby.

"What St. Francis says is that his love for God is not based on hope of reward, or on fear of future punishment.

"Tu, tu, mi Jesu, totum me
Amplexus es in cruce.
Tulisti clavos, lanceam,
Multamque ignominiam,
Innumeros dolores,
Sudores et angores,
Et mortem, ac haec propter me,
Ac pro me peccatore.

"You see, he stands before the cross, as it were, and counts up the physical suffering that our Lord bore—the nails, the lance, the mental agony, the dishonor, and the spiritual anguish of desolation. Even death itself.—And all this, he says—for me—and me a sinner, without claim on God's mercy, let alone any claim on His love. And then come the most important lines:

"Cur igitur non amem te,
O Jesu, amantissime,
Non ut in coelo salves me
Aut ne aeternum damnes me,
Nec praemii ullius spe;
SED SICUT TU AMASTI ME,
SIC AMO ET AMABO TE,
O JESU AMANTISSIME.

"'Why then,' he asks, 'should I not love Thee?

Not in order that I may be saved, nor in order to escape eternal loss—nor for the hope of any reward at all—but simply as a matter of fair and just return:

"For as Thou hast loved me, so will I love Thee,
O Jesus, most worthy of all the love we have to give."

He underscored the last three lines, and then repeated them softly to himself, two or three times, making that funny little ducking bow whenever he used the Lord's name.

"Sed sicut tu amasti me,
Sic amo et amabo te,
O Jesu amantissime."

We sat there in silence for several minutes, in the warm sun, amidst the noise of the passing traffic that flowed down the two streets on both sides of the little triangle of green in which we had been resting. With his usual abrupt shake of his shoulders, my Fear-Hunter stood up suddenly and stared down at the grass, digging into the turf with his heel. I knew the signs. He was trying to make up his mind about something.

"No," he broke out suddenly, "I have got to get it over to you somehow.—I haven't made you feel the intensity of the personal appeal. And I don't know how to do it.—In these days it takes more than the sight of a cross or a crucifix to bring home to men's hearts the reality of the love of God for us—I know that I ought not to be talking to you

like this.—As I've said before, I'm a physician, not a priest.—But your case is practically out of my hands now. I can talk to you as one man to another. Both of us groping after something that neither of us has yet securely attained."

He hesitated, dug into the ground again with his heel; and I heard him mutter to himself: "I wonder—if I dare.—To meet modern needs in a modern way.—It might do it."

Then, as his habit was after making a decision, he squared his thin shoulders and put his hand on my arm.

"I want you to come with me for an hour," he said. "Don't ask me where we are going, or what we're going to see. I want to show you something. —I don't know whether it will affect you as it affected me.—At any rate, it can't do any harm. And it may—it may make you see and feel and understand what I've been driving at.—Wait here a moment for me, will you?"

He turned away, went outside the church inclosure, and round the corner toward the Clergy House. In a few moments he came back with the young clergyman with whom he had driven up an hour before. He was looking at his watch.

"We can just about make it," I heard him say to the other. "I know the manager. He'll let me go where I want to, I think."

We got into the clergyman's little automobile, and started off through the crowded streets. Down

in the business part of the city my Fear-Hunter and I left the car. He led me up a side-street. We were, I knew, in the midst of the theater district. We went in a low door—the back door of some sort of a playhouse. He left me alone for a few minutes. Then he came back with an usher.—This young man took us up winding stairs and through dark passages. Once, as we passed a partially open door, I caught a glimpse of a big darkened auditorium, the darkness cut at its center by a long beam of light. I knew where I was.—Why was I being taken to a movie? It seemed utterly ridiculous. But I said nothing.—Finally the usher brought us to the end of a passageway. On the far side was a door. Across the passage, opposite, was another door, with a fanlight over it: "Exit." This door my Fear-Hunter opened, and motioned me to follow him. We came out into the dazzling sunlight, on a sort of platform, high up on the walls of the theater, from which a fire-escape led down to the street. But we were shut in on all sides by these same walls and by those of other high buildings. It was very quiet. You could hear very little of the city's noise and traffic. And in one corner of the platform was a chair or two, more or less dilapidated, that had probably been taken from the auditorium and left there to be repaired.

My Fear-Hunter, who had scarcely said a word for the past twenty minutes, drew his hand through my arm.

"I want you to look at certain pictures," he said. "It won't take long.—You'll recognize the story that has been adapted for the screen. But don't pay much attention to that.—You'll know what it is that I want you to see, as soon as the picture flashes on the white background.—Come on."

We went back into the passageway, crossed it, and opened the door on the other side. I found myself in an empty box. My Doctor led me down to the very front, until I was sitting directly facing the screen, with no one between the pictures and myself. He slipped after me quietly, in the darkness, to a chair at my side.

The film that was being shown was based on a famous book which every boy, I suppose, has read, at some time during his youth. It deals with the adventures of a young Jewish noble who lived in Jerusalem at the same period of time as that in which Christ preached, performed miracles, was betrayed and crucified. Now I have an intense dislike of seeing what I call sacred subjects made common by being put on the stage or into moving pictures. And as I realized what was coming I became antagonistic, and almost angry with my Doctor for having dragged me to such a place. But I soon changed my attitude. For, in all the pictures in which Christ appeared, you never saw Him! —I mean, you knew that He was there, but all you could distinguish was either a center of soft light, or the hem of a white mantle, or an outstretched

arm. In a wonderful representation of the trial before Pilate, you had Pilate himself, on his judgment seat, in the center of the picture, evidently pleading with someone who stood before him; but this Someone was surrounded by soldiers. You caught only a momentary glimpse of the white figure.

But—but—how shall I ever describe the two most powerful pictures—the pictures that my Doctor had brought me there to see, as I realized the moment that they flashed on the screen. Both of them were connected with the Way of the Cross, the passing of Christ on His way to Calvary, carrying the heavy wooden cross, preceded by soldiers, and moving between two lines of gaping spectators. You looked at the crowd as if you yourself were standing in the very last row on the farthest side. In the immediate foreground, just in front of you, were the backs of the staring mob. Beyond them was the crowd on the other side of the narrow lane, kept open to let some procession pass. So, standing, as it were, on tiptoe, you waited impatiently to see what was coming.

First came the Roman legionaries. And then, up above the heads of the intervening crowd, you saw the cross, carried on someone's shoulder, moving slowly forward. It looked tremendously heavy; and it bore down on the right shoulder of the man who stooped under its weight. His head, his face, you could not see at all. The heavy cross hid

everything except one arm, the right arm, an arm in a white loose sleeve. It was bent upward, with the hand grasping the cross, just where the cross-piece joins the upright. You could see the muscles shiver and strain under the crushing weight. But the shoulder seemed to bear up as firmly as it could, with a sort of patient endurance. The sight of that one white arm, clasping the cross, was the first thing that made my mouth dry and that brought a feeling of fullness to my throat.

As the little group moved on toward Calvary, it halted now and then. The picture would change for an instant. First it was a mother, kneeling in the front row of the crowd, so that she could almost touch Christ as He passed. In her arms was a little baby—dead. And, as the white figure, bearing the cross, came near—you could not see Him, but you knew He was there—the mother held out to Him her dead baby. Then you saw a hand, an arm—the left hand—for the right was still holding up the cross—and this hand was stretched out and touched the dead child.—The baby stirred in its mother's arms; life came back to it. The mother kissed it, pressed it to her breast. But then, as she looked up to give thanks, the cross had moved on.—And so it happened, three or four times, along the way to Calvary. Next it was a blind man, crying out, "Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me." And then it was two crouching lepers, huddled in

their rags, and speaking to the passing figure with the cross: "Lord, if Thou willst, Thou canst make us clean." And every time that a voice was raised, asking for help, each time you could see the moving cross check, and halt, and then the hand, stretched out, to give sight and healing and life itself. It was wonderful—the contrast, I mean. The contrast between the right hand and arm, tense and almost exhausted under the weight of the cross, and the other hand stretched out always to help, at each cry of suffering or loss.

I sat there in the darkness of the auditorium, forgetting where I was, craned forward on my chair, watching, watching, above the heads of the Jewish crowd, that slow onward movement of the cross, supported by the tired right arm. Twice it fell. And each time I felt as if something had caught me at the throat. Twice it was lifted up by soldiers, and the white arm went up once more to receive the crushing weight. At last it passed on out of sight.

And then there was flashed across the screen—a picture that I still see, sometimes, of a Good Friday.

This time it was as if you were one of the Roman soldiers, the last one of the rear-guard, who had been left behind to keep open the narrow lane between the two lines of staring people. Maybe he was keeping it open for some passing Roman of importance, or for the High Priest himself. At any rate, as if with his eyes, you looked up the long empty

lane between the lines—up the path along which the cross-bearing figure has just passed. And, in the dust of the street, along that narrow way, you saw footprints, the mark of His footsteps printed in blood, in His own blood, on the hard, rough pavement. Here and there, beside these blood-stained footprints, were drops of blood, fallen from the head that had been crowned with thorns. That was all there was to the picture. Just those blood-stained footprints; here and there, just a few drops of sprinkled blood.

In the darkness of our box a hand caught at my shoulder. I heard someone sob, as if the very heart of him were torn and broken. I stumbled to my feet, and followed the tug of the hand to the door of the box, out into the lighted passage, and then across it, to the door opposite. In another moment my Doctor and I were standing side by side on the sunlit platform of the fire-escape. The sudden change from the darkness of the theater to the sunlight blinded me. A moment since I had been, it seemed to me, in Jerusalem, staring at something that had stirred me deeply, and now here I stood in this sheltered, sunny, high corner of a great modern city with the distant roar of the traffic just audible below me. I felt dazed, confused. Then, as my eyes grew used to the strong light, I looked at my companion, and my own confusion passed into a sense of amazed surprise.

I had known this man for months; I thought I

knew him well. But, for an instant, it seemed to me that I had never really seen or known him before.

His thin, clean-cut face was puckered and twisted. His habitual restraint, his composure, had been stripped from him. And he—he was crying.—His cheeks were stained with half-dried tears; and, as I watched, another tear slipped from his swimming eyes and ran down to his lips.

I had admired and liked him before. I think that then, for the first time, I began really to revere him. For he made not the slightest attempt to conceal his emotion. He did not try to cough or blow his nose, or to pretend that he had been doing anything except what he had been doing—crying. I've seen men cry occasionally. I never met a man before or since who was not ashamed of his tears.

After a moment or two, he found his voice. It was a little unsteady. At first I did not understand what he was saying. I grew almost afraid. But then I recognized that he was repeating, over and over, part of the Latin hymn that he had written out for me a few hours ago.

"Tulisti clavos, lanceam,
Multamque ignominiam,
Et mortem, ac haec propter me,
Ac pro me peccatore.

"Cur igitur non amem te,
O Jesu amantissime?"

And then the last two lines over and over again.

Finally he turned to me, his familiar twisted smile running across his tear-stained face.

"Did you understand?" he asked. "Did you get the contrast between the patient suffering and, in spite of it, the outgoing love for men that must touch and help them, even in the hour of its own greatest agony?—And the blood-stained footsteps! —To me they kept saying only one thing: 'So God loved the world.' For, just think a minute." He took me by the arm with something of his old impetuous enthusiasm. "We've seen a representation of something that happened two thousand odd years ago. If that cross-bearing figure, that once walked that way of pain in Jerusalem, was merely a man—a man whose heart was so filled with a love for his fellows that he went about healing and helping them, and finally patiently accepted a shameful, agonizing death because he believed that he was thereby showing the same love—love in dying for them—why, then, what a marvelous human example for us—for any man to-day! What a Master—a human Master—to follow! What an inspiration to us in this grasping, materialistic age of ours!

"But—" His voice fell almost to a whisper. "But if—if—it was not a mere man—who bore that cross —who printed those bloody footsteps in the dust of Jerusalem—why——"

He broke off for a moment. Then, taking a deep breath, like a diver coming up for air, he went on:

"The very God! think, Abib; dost thou think?
So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving too—
So, through the thunder comes a human voice
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!
* * *
And thou must love me who have died for thee!'

"That's the only bit of Browning I could ever remember. But it puts the thing so splendidly."

There was nothing much that I could say. Besides, I was tired with the emotional strain of the past half-hour. Still my Doctor made no motion to leave. Automatically he put his hand in his pocket, drew out his cigarette case, and lighted a cigarette. He was so deep in his own thought that he did not even offer one to me. He drew in a deep inhalation, and let the smoke issue lazily from between his lips. Then, suddenly, his whole face changed. He stared down at the cigarette that he held between his fingers.

"Ahh-h-h-h," he said. His breath came from between his lips like the lash of a whip.—"Ah—so God loved the world.—And I—I light another cigarette!"

He turned to me again, and his voice sounded so bitter that it almost choked him.

"In the Gospels," he said, "the young man who had heard our Lord tell him to sell all that he had and to take up the cross and to follow—he, at least, was ashamed enough to turn sorrowfully away. But I—and others to whom the same call comes to-day—we have not even the decency to turn away or even

to be sorrowful.—We—we go on placidly as if nothing had happened.—We—we light another cigarette. No wonder the world is what it is; no wonder that it is so full of fear."

"But," I protested, for I could not bear to hear him speak so bitterly, "what else can we do except go on with our own work, only doing the work better than we did before?"

He began to walk up and down excitedly on the little platform, almost knocking over the two old dilapidated chairs.

"I'll tell you," he said. "I came to see this picture last week—came as a scoffer—with a clerical friend of mine.—That same young cleric who drove us down here in his car.—He got the same unexpected reaction that I did. He heard the same call.—Well, he is a man of good family—a wealthy man—a man who can have, in the future, whatever of power and position the church of to-day has to give. But he has put all that aside.—Up North, in one of the New England States, on the bank of a great river, there stands an unusual kind of a house—a monastery.—In it there are some forty or fifty men who, for many years, have been living there under the old Benedictine rule. It is a place of holiness, a place of peace. There a man might find rest for his soul.—And this young friend of mine is going there to-morrow—going to stay there till he dies.—That's what a man can do, if you ask me."

A sudden fear crept over me. I didn't know much

about monks and monasteries. I did know that this Doctor of mine was in a very emotional condition—a state of mind utterly unlike his normal one.—I couldn't run any risk of *his* going off to a monastery too. He was too useful. I needed him; other people like me might need him also.

"See here," I said, taking his arm and making him walk up and down with me. "I've got nothing against monasteries. But I think that you're overlooking an important matter. I notice that you have not mentioned one of the pictures that we've just seen. One of the things that happened, in the story, while Christ was being led to Calvary.—You remember the young Jewish noble that the original book is all about, and how he thinks that Christ has come to be a real king like Caesar, and how he plans to save Him from the Romans before they can crucify Him.—Didn't you notice that part of the film?—It happened just after Christ stopped to heal the lepers.—The young Jew broke through the crowd and told his 'king' that He need not be afraid, that he, the prince, and his followers were coming to rescue Him in a few minutes. And you remember what Christ said—or those words of His that were thrown on the screen: 'My Kingdom is not of this world.' And He sent the young Prince away, and went on—to Calvary. That young Jew who wanted to do the rescuing—he, like yourself—wanted to *do* something.—But, if I understand it right, Christ tried to tell him that it wasn't impor-

tant to *do* something; the really important thing was to *be* something. Oh, I know that He gave commands and told His disciples to do certain things. But there's no good in the *doing,* without the *being.* Judas *did* the things his Master told him to do probably. But he left out the *being.*—I know I don't put it clearly."

My Doctor had stopped short and was staring at me. Deep down in his eyes I could begin to see again his old clear look.

"You are," I went on, "if you'll forgive me for saying so, a good physician—a beloved physician.—Why not keep on being it, only better and better.—You know, you mightn't—I'm not well up in these matters—but you mightn't make—make a very good monk."

He burst out laughing and I began to feel less anxious.

"Then my experiment to-day has been a failure after all," he said. "I hunted you up this afternoon because I felt that I had not been an entirely trustworthy guide. I thought that you would never be able to acquire the habit of the presence of God unless you understood what the love of God really can mean; and that you might grow discouraged trying to develop this mental habit and drop back again into the torment of all your old fears. I wanted to leave with you the realization of the fact that it is only PERFECT love that casteth out fear."

Then I had a sort of inspiration. I suppose that the idea must have come to me unconsciously while I was looking at the pictures, and that now it rose to the surface of my mind. I would prove to my Doctor not only that I understood what he was trying to tell me, but that I understood it even better than he did himself. So I said:

"You have shown me a lot. But there is one thing, I think, that I can show you.—I learned it this afternoon.—When you and your four visitants talked to me about 'love casting out fear,' I always thought that by 'love' you meant the realization of the soul that it is in the care of a loving God. The emphasis was all on God's love for us.—You can't be afraid, you'd say, because you know that nothing can happen except what God wills, and He can't will anything too hard or too painful for you to bear, because He loves you.—But you never said much about our love for God and for others, and how *that* love can cast out fear.—Think of those pictures we've just seen. Christ, whether He were God or man, must have known what the Romans and the Jews were going to do to Him. He must have known that they were going to torment and kill Him, if He put Himself into their hands. Yet He went straight up to Jerusalem, right into their power.—But—and here's the point—He was never afraid.—In the Garden He may have been weighed down by the thought of men's ingratitude. But even then, there was no fear.—Because all that He did, all that He

allowed others to do to Him, was done out of love for God and for mankind.—The man whose heart is full of love for God, and who tries to act from motives of love toward his fellowmen, is never afraid. The ordinary everyday lover whose loved one returns his love, has only one fear—lest his loved one should stop loving him. As long as he's sure of her love he isn't afraid of anything. But, with God, we know that we can't lose His love.—He goes on loving us and hoping that we will answer to His love. And so it isn't only God's love for us that casts out fear. It is our love for Him, and our love for our fellows also.—And taking the two together is, I think, what St. John meant by 'perfect love.' "

This was a terribly long speech for me. I dare say it was even longer. But this is as much as I remember, now that I come to write it down.

Anyway, it had a good effect. By the time I had finished, my Fear-Hunter seemed himself again. He checked himself in his walk at my side, and took my hand.

"I told you," he said, "that physicians should not intrude into the mental sphere that belongs to the priest or minister. I am rightly rebuked for my intrusion.—And yet I am not sorry. For you have taught me something that, without your help, I might have missed.—Now I must be going.—I have ten thousand things to do if I am to be ready to leave to-morrow for my vacation.—Come

along.—I'll put you into a cab and send you home."

"Just one moment more," I protested. "By the time you return to town I shall probably be back in my office, hard at work once more.—I owe you a great deal.—You've shown me the only absolutely right way of dealing with fear. I've only just begun to practice it, and the rest of my life will be all too short to perfect myself even in its simplest details. —But—I am not absolutely sure of myself, even now. Sometimes I feel as if I might get ill and depressed and discouraged—too weak to stand up against the old enemies.—Can't you give me something to take with me—some sort of a remedy—that I can turn to in times of discouragement?—I'm sure you can.—Come now, before you go, sit down here on this chair, and write me out a prescription against fear."

He did as I asked, and sat down on one of the rickety chairs. The film had come to an end some time since; we had heard the distant sounds of the audience leaving the theater, and now, everywhere about us, there was silence. My Doctor took from his pocket one of those little pads of blank prescriptions that every physician carries with him—those little oblong bits of paper, with a big "℞" in the left-hand corner.

"I might write it in the old medieval form," he said, with one of his sidelong glances that always

meant that he was thinking of some sort of a joke. "I might say" (and he started to write):

> "Valet contra timorem et perturbationem animae. Probatum est.
>
> "That means: 'The following receipt is good for fear and distress of soul. And it has been found to work successfully.' Then we could begin: 'Recipe, or take, of the flowers of humility six ounces. Extract their efficient power by boiling in a pint of the waters of affliction, over a slow flame of anxiety. Dissolve the result in the wine of the presence of God. And then pour into——' "

"But you're making a jest of it," I protested. "I wanted something sensible—something that I could understand—something that might help me, and others, some day."

"I'm sorry," he said. He tore off the prescription on which he had started to write, and began on another. As he wrote he seemed to grow more and more interested. He forgot my presence entirely. I stood by his side for half an hour, watching him fill one of the little oblong blanks after another with his clear, precise writing, tossing each one, as he finished it, into his old felt hat, which lay on the ground at his feet. Finally he underlined the last few words with a dash of his pen.

"There," he said, passing his hand across his forehead, as if recalling himself to the things of this

material world. "Take this." He picked up the heap of blanks, arranged them in order, folded them lengthwise, and handed them to me. "But don't read it now.—Keep it until later.—Now we really must be off."

Thrusting his gift into my inner pocket, I followed him down through the silent passages of the theater, out into the noisy, confused life of the streets. He hailed a passing taxi, held open the door, and put me in.

"One of my chief prejudices," he said, as he stood on the curb, smiling at me through the open window of the cab, "is the prejudice against the saying of good-by. I always avoid it if I can. Why emphasize partings when there are so many of them? I like to slip out of my patients' lives without tumult and the blowing of trumpets and shawms. Besides," he added, reaching inside the cab and giving me a final pat on the shoulder, "I'm earnestly hoping that we may never meet again."

"What?" I exclaimed, really very deeply hurt, for I liked the man.

"As physician and patient, I mean," he answered. "And, as man and man, we're not likely to meet, are we?"

"Perhaps not," said I, and turned away.

But he saw that I was hurt, and thrust his hand through the cab window.

"Good-by, then," he said. The cab started, and I left him, standing there and waving his old gray

hat, with the October sunshine lighting up his yellowish gray hair.

After I got back to the Clergy House, I took out the little sheaf of papers that he had given me. I have kept them as one of my chiefest treasures to this day, together with that old envelope on which he had written St. Francis Xavier's Latin hymn.

And now that I have come to the last pages of this book—now that I am back again at work—in the Spring of a new year, with my boy coming home for Easter, and my wife and myself closer together in sympathy and understanding than ever before—now I can make no better end to what I have written than to copy down here my Fear-Hunter's "Bidding Prayer for the Fearful."

A BIDDING PRAYER FOR THE FEARFUL

Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.

THERE be thirsts many and grievous. But of all grievous thirsts, most grievous is the thirst of fear. Where it abides, there is no fertility, no blossoming, nor any fragrance of refreshing shade. But the scorching sun of daily life beats down pitilessly, and men stagger forward on their dusty paths, with parched throats and empty hearts. And many who are most athirst know not why they suffer, and to still their torment, drink of the poisonous pools, that lie hidden, here and there, covered by weeds, and unclean.

Come ye to the waters.

THERE be waters many, some deadly, some refreshing. But, of all healing and refreshing waters, that which refreshes most and heals eternally is the water that flows in the great river of God's Presence, the water of the love of God. Where it flows, there is fruitful flowering and peaceful shadow. And they who drink of it, or but touch it with their lips, go onward gladly, forgetting the weight of their burdens and the weariness of the way.

Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. Come ye—all.

YOU who wake suddenly in the depth of night, with your heart pounding against your ribs, and oppressed by an appalling sense of some hidden danger; who try to call out for help and cannot speak, and who fear lest you must die, ere you can call. In the midst of those dark hours of terror, the river of God's Presence is flowing, unseen, beside you. Stretch out your trembling hand, and sprinkle your throbbing, bursting breast. The tumult and the fear that is choking you will subside; your heart will begin to beat slowly, softly, regularly; the fear and the hidden danger will vanish—and you shall sleep—in peace. For underneath are the Everlasting Arms.

YOU, wife or mother, surrounded by those you love and so absorbed in their lives that you have scarcely a thought for your own, and who, though fearing nothing for yourself, are fearful—so fearful for them.—You, whose entire existence is but a single moment of tense anxiety and of dread expectation—fearing the loss of a husband's love, interpreting or misinterpreting his every movement, his every word, dreading every slight variation from the habitual routine of daily domestic life as a possible bringer of ill, afraid of what your children may do or be or say—until you surround your whole household with an atmosphere of discomfort and of nagging distrust.—Come, to the clear air and the soft light that lies about the river of God's Presence. —Drink.—And your eyes shall be opened, and all your fears shall disappear. For you shall see your beloved ones watched over by a love and a care even more loving, more careful than your own; guarded by a protection infinitely more powerful than any protection that you yourself can afford.

AND you who walk all day long amidst small irritating fears that beset every inch of your daily path—fears of your own incompetence, of your inefficiency, of your failing powers of application and success; fears about your body and its functions; fears about your mind and the way it works or refuses to work; fears of infection, of serious illness, of a helpless, hopeless old age. And who seek

to hold off these fears a little by all sorts of mental makeshifts—by countings and arrangings and numberings and touchings.—Give over these harmful helps. There is only one sure help—one sure release from your servitude. And it lies near at hand.—Sit you down, in quiet, by the side of the river of God's Presence. And, as a boy tosses stones into a pond, so cast your fears, one by one, into the waters of God's love.—They will disappear. You shall never see them again and you can walk on, a free man, once more. Only—only, in the future, do not wander too far from the river-bank.

AND you who have been, suddenly, unexpectedly, brought face to face with the thought of death; who, after a long life of perfect health, have been abruptly confronted by some serious impairment of this material body; and who cower back, with hands covering your eyes, unable to look at the presence that stands beckoning before you, and clinging, clinging, in ever-increasing terror, to every shred of life and its varied interests.—Come—first be a man. Man enough, or woman enough, to stagger as far as the river. Its water has great power for such as you.—Drink.—And your trembling hands shall fall from your terror-stricken eyes. You shall see death that has been there, before you always, although you would never acknowledge it. But—you shall see it, not as it looked a moment ago, but transformed and transfigured. So trans-

formed that even its name has changed in your own mouth, and as you pronounce it your own ears shall tell you that that name is not "death," but "life." So you shall find yourself not facing a blank, hopeless wall, the end of everything, but looking forward through a wide gateway into the true beginning. And, like Socrates, standing condemned before his enemies, you shall be "of good hope toward death."

YOU, also, who are afraid of your secret self, that part of you which the world never sees, but which you yourself know and dread, lying below the level of your conscious thought, and stretching forth its head, every now and then, like a deadly snake in the grass.—All your life you have fled from it. All your life you have feared it. And it has grown fat and strong upon your fear. It has been the cause of almost all your unhappiness, of all your failures, of all your disgrace and shame. And so you walk softly through life, fearing its next attack, hoping to escape it somehow—by pretending that it is not there. But often, in the early morning, when you wake suddenly and cannot fall asleep again, the ghosts of all your past unhappiness come back to haunt you, and you see your whole life, past, present and future, colored and poisoned by this one hidden enemy. So you go, all your days, in fear.—But for you, too, the river of God's Presence flows close by. —Give over with pretense; drink of its waters; and —face your enemy. You shall find it a poor, weak

thing, after all. A snake, if you will, but a snake whose poison-fangs have been drawn, and who has no longer any power to terrorize or to harm.

AND you—God help and strengthen you—upon whom the black cloud of depression has descended; you whose mind no longer seems to function freely and happily, but is frozen and blocked by constant fear; you who cannot concentrate upon a single line of simple print, cannot make even the simplest decisions of everyday life, and to whom the slightest mental activity is difficult, impeded, almost impossible. You who are tormented by feelings of utter unworthiness, of having committed some unpardonable sin, of having forfeited God's mercy and being eternally cast out from his love. You who seem to be alone—unprotected, unbefriended, desolate—in a land of terror and of unreality. And who endure such intense mental anguish that, in comparison, the most grievous bodily suffering seems welcome and of little account. You, whose inner self seems to be sinking—losing touch, somehow—losing control—losing the power to do or to think anything—except that one thing that you must not do, but that is ever before your mind—tempting you, calling you on, telling you that "This way alone lies peace."—For the love of God, close your ears to that voice. If you are so fast bound in misery that you cannot move yourself, beg of someone to lead you to the bank of the river of God's Presence, and

sit down there with whoever has guided you, asking that he hold tight—tight to your hand—and with his other hand, give you to drink.—And you shall drink, perhaps not healing immediate, perhaps not sudden all-sufficing peace; but you shall drink strength—and patience—and courage. Courage and patience enough to tarry here by the river, until for you the darkness is overpast, and the sun of happiness shines upon you once more.

FOR, there be, indeed, thirsts many and grievous. But of all grievous thirsts, most grievous is the thirst of fear.

AND there be waters many, some deadly, some refreshing. But for the thirst of fear, there is but one water that refreshes—but one water of eternal healing—the water that flows in the great river of God's Presence, the water of the love of God. *Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.*

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